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Community college ESL students reflecting on thoughts and feelings about writing and themselves as writers : an exploratory study in metacognition.

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE ESL STUDENTS REFLECTING ON THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ABOUT WRITING AND THEMSELVES AS WRITERS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY IN METACOGNITION

A Dissertation Presented

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved Greek ancestors who taught me how faith, hope, and love can guide a traveler safely and joyously up every mountain road.

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This dissertation would not have been completed without all the advice, encouragement, and love I received.

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ABSTRACT

COMMUNITY COLLEGE ESL STUDENTS REFLECTING ON THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ABOUT WRITING AND THEMSELVES AS WRITERS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY IN METACOGNITION

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This study explored metacognition of sixteen adult learners enrolled in an advanced level community college ESL writing course. The ESL participants reflected on three topics concerning thoughts and feelings about writing and themselves as writers: attitude towards writing (feelings and motivations), writing identity, and self-direction (self-evaluation and planning).

Using a participatory research approach, data were collected from three semi-structured interviews and numerous written responses during one semester. Participants were from the Hispanic and Korean cultures with a majority Puerto Rican (75%) and female (81%).

Overall, feelings towards writing were complex (both positive and negative) and changed throughout the semester. Positive feelings energized and appeared related to an individual awareness of progress rather than an outside measure of proficiency. Motivations for learning to write were also complex (including both external and internal

orientations) and changed over the semester. External utilitarian motivations seemed to be primary initially. Internal motivations such as expression of feelings, joy in self-expression, and expansion of cognition surfaced as the semester progressed. Participants' descriptions of themselves as writers changed from incredulity, negativity, and denial to a relatively positive and distinct sense of writing identity. Self-direction changed from global (or very general) self-evaluations and planning to more specific and empowering self-evaluations and planning. Encouraging interviewing language and subsequent dialogue fostered self-direction. Both positive and negative global self-evaluations indicated powerlessness while increased specificity (either positive or negative) indicated potential for improvement through concrete planning.

Suggestions for modifications to a traditional ESL writing class include acknowledgement of strengths, focus on progress in a noncompetitive workshop environment, and inclusion of metacognitive topics that acknowledge the affective or emotional component to learning to write. Student-participants reported benefits of the metacognitive approach: clarification, opportunity for verbal expression, time for thinking and understanding, awareness of progress through comparison of work, and increased awareness of the instructor (or researcher). The researcher also reported benefits of the metacognitive approach: a harmony of

student-centered methods and goals, data for researchers and curriculum developers, "encouraging" and "enabling" of participants, and growth of self-awareness and autonomy of participants.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDICES

TABLES OF BASIC INFORMATION

Table

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Traditionally, general English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction has focused on grammar and the forms and rules of language (Howatt 1984). In the past decade, however, ESL instructors have begun to use a communicative approach to language learning (Savignon 1972), which has led to interest in a process approach to writing instruction. In essence, both a communicative approach to oral instruction and a process approach to writing instruction have emphasized attention to content (ideas or the intended communicative message) before form (grammar or linguistics) in language. The research has also reflected this interest in content before form. This was followed by increased attention to the learners themselves and research styles which began to include ethnography and participatory research. For example, in studying writing, ESL and First Language (L1) researchers began to ask for student self-reports about the writing process (Raimes 1985, Zamel 1983, Perl 1979, Gorden & Braun 1986, Flower & Hayes 1981). Students were also encouraged to become more reflective readers in order to become effective revisers of their early

drafts of a composition (L1 researchers and instructors: Beach 1986, McCarthy et al 1985, Murray 1968, 1982, F. Smith 1982b, Elbow 1981).

Researchers and instructors had become interested in learning directly from students (Hosenfield 1976, 1979, Naiman et al 1978, Rubin 1975, Stern 1975). The psychosocial context of the learner was considered for its impact on Second Language (L2) learning. Individual differences such as self-concept (Giles & Byrne 1982), motivation (Gardner and Lambert 1959, 1972, Gardner 1985, Oller 1981), and anxiety (Bailey 1983) became topics of interest in L2 research. Thus, the orientation of instruction and research began to change from a teacher-centered, teacher-directed approach to a more student-centered, student-directed approach.

This interest in a more student-centered and student-directed approach took another direction with attention to learning strategies (Bialystok 1979, 1980, 1981, Chamot 1987, Wenden & Rubin 1987). In adult learning research, learning strategies were related to self-directed learning as advocated by Malcolm Knowles (1975, 1984). Research in learner strategies and self-direction are interests within the more general educational topic of metacognition or metacognitive awareness, which will be defined within the context of this study as learning about learning or knowing about knowing.

Anita Wenden (1982, 1986) and others in the fields of L1 and L2 education were interested in encouraging self-direction in learning (Moran 1983-1984, Kinsey 1985, Knowles 1984, Thomas & Harri-Augstein 1977, Lenz 1982, Armanet & Obese-jecty, 1981, Littlejohn 1985, Dickinson & Carver 1980). In Anita Wenden's (1982, 1986) case study of student self-direction in learning a second language, her primary interest was in the strategies students used in various social settings to increase their oral production and comprehension or how they directed their own learning to increase their "comprehensible input" (understandable language) (Krashen, 1982, 1983). Influenced by the work of Wenden and others, this study will add to the Second Language research on individual differences, learner strategies, and self-direction by investigating three topics related to the metacognitive awareness of students in the specific area of writing instruction.

Statement of the Problem

This study explored metacognition in one community college ESL Writing Class. This study attended to learning strategies and self-direction as well as to other aspects of metacognitive awareness such as students' attitudes toward writing and self-concepts as writers (individual differences).

This study narrows the research done by Wenden (1986) on metacognition in relation to general ESL learning by focusing on learning to write. Wenden suggested that "curricular strategies, techniques and materials" for increasing metacognitive awareness are needed for the ESL classroom. In her study she explored what "surfaced" when she questioned ESL learners about their metacognitive awareness in learning ESL in various social settings (1986). This study provides additional research on metacognition in relation to ESL learning by focusing on writing rather than general ESL learning. Furthermore, this study provides data and/or adds to the L2 research that has been explored in L1 learning in the following areas:

Attitudes of writers (Brand and Powell 1986)

Self-concepts as writers (Gourley 1983, Gourley et al 1983, McCarthy, Meier, & Rinderer 1985)

Self-direction in learning (Knowles 1975, 1984, Freire 1981)

This exploratory study investigated students' reflections on their thoughts and feelings about writing by asking questions about the following three specific topics at the beginning, middle, and end of one semester:

1. Attitude towards writing (affect, feelings, or emotions)

2. Description of themselves as writers (self-concept or writing identity)

3. Reflections about self-direction (self-evaluation and planning)

The following are examples of the questions asked about these topics:

1. What is your attitude about writing? How do you feel about writing?

2. How would you describe yourself as a writer?

3. What are your strengths? What are your needs? What steps can you take to capitalize upon your strengths, and how can you improve upon your needs?

For a detailed description of data collection procedures, see Chapter IV, "Research Design: Data Collection."

The primary purpose of this study was to explore metacognitive awareness about the above three topics in one ESL writing class. A secondary purpose was to explore the responses to the above three topics to search for evidence of changes in metacognitive awareness of students from the beginning to the end of one semester. Another secondary purpose of the study was to explore the responses to the above three topics in order to make suggestions for the development of a curriculum model that would integrate metacognition into a process-oriented, traditionally structured, community college ESL writing class.

Significance of the Study

Students enrolled in a community college ESL writing course needed to learn to write in their L2 well enough to succeed in Basic Writing and College Writing. It has been the dilemma of language teachers that one course, or even a

series of courses, is not sufficient for students to become native-like in their proficiency in writing. Instructors of adult ESL learners find that even the most orally proficient have difficulty when it comes to writing in an academic setting (Zamel 1983). Leslie Dickinson and David Carver in "Learning How to Learn: Steps Towards Self-Direction in Foreign Language Learning in Schools" remarked upon this need to prepare language learners to become autonomous so learning would continue after the school course ends:

> All language courses come to an end, but in very few do all the pupils learn everything by the end of the course. In language learning the very idea is ridiculous--there is far too much to learn and not enough time to learn half of it.
>
> . . .Because of its complexity, the person who wishes to continue learning a language independently has to first learn <u>how</u> to do it, and has to build up his or her confidence in their ability to do it. (1980, p. 1)

John Curtin (1979) in his article entitled "Attitudes to Language Learning: the Adult Student," discussed the problem of learner attitude in relation to language learning. He thought that students often approached language learning as they did other subjects, believing that memorization of the content of a course would mean acquisition of the knowledge needed for language learning; however, they needed to practice using what they learned in order to communicate with others. To Curtin, language learning was a skill and an art. He believed that students, who often had "simplistic attitudes" towards language learning, needed to

change in order to succeed, that they must be "prepared psychologically for the task of language learning," and that teachers should attend to students' attitudes at the very beginning of language learning (1979, p. 283).

Introducing metacognition into the ESL writing class could provide opportunities for students to become more critically aware of their writing and themselves as writers. It could provide a vehicle for self-direction and eventually independence or autonomy in learning, which would reach beyond the ESL classroom experience. In order to develop a curriculum which includes metacognition, instructors first need to know more about students' metacognitive awareness. Responses to topics for reflection could provide a window for ESL instructors and researchers to view students' metacognitive awareness. This could provide insights about learners which could aid instructors in curriculum development. This might also provide students with an opportunity to increase their metacognitive awareness which could aid them in learning to write.

Assumptions of the Study

The "Background to the Study" above and Chapters II-IV of this dissertation elaborate upon the research that supports the assumptions that will be outlined below.

The first assumption of this study is that, in order for the ESL learner to develop sufficient skills in writing

to achieve native-like competence, more experience with language learning than a classroom provides is necessary. Language learning can be likened to an art, because it involves more than learning a discrete set of skills (Curtin 1979). Since language is complex (Spolsky 1980) and impossible to teach in all its complexity within the time constraints of a course or series of courses, it is essential that students continue learning after the end of a course (Dickinson and Carver 1980). An ESL course that provides practice and encouragement in self-directed learning (Littlejohn 1985) might prepare students to become "autonomous" learners (Dickinson & Carver (1980).

Second, increased metacognitive awareness could contribute to students' learning processes (A. Brown 1982, Elbow 1973, Freire 1981, Knowles 1975, 1984, McCarthy, Meier & Rinderer 1985, Brand and Powell 1986, Wenden 1983, 1986, Wilson 1985).

Third, increased metacognitive awareness can extend to self-direction in learning (Wenden 1983, Gordon and Braun 1986, Freire 1983).

Fourth, attitude is correlated with achievement in language learning in general (H. Brown 1980, Curran 1982, Gardner and Lambert 1959, 1972, Gardner 1985, Savignon 1972, Krashen 1982) and writing in particular (Brand and Powell 1986).

Fifth, a positive self-evaluation of oneself as a writer has a positive effect upon achievement in writing (Gourley [also known as Solsken] 1983, Gourley et al 1983) McCarthy, Meier, & Rinderer 1985).

Sixth, self-evaluation of writing skill contributes to learning to write (Moran 1983-1984, Shaughnessy 1977, Stelzner and Curtis 1985, Elbow 1981, Murray 1982).

Seventh, learners practice self-expression and gain insight into their writing and themselves as writers during the self-report process (Reason and Rowan 1981).

Eighth, in addition to the benefits that might accrue for student writers, self-reports of ESL learners can provide valuable insights for researchers, curriculum developers, and/or teachers (Borg and Gall 1983, Freeman et al 1986).

Delimitations

This study narrowed its focus to the exploration of the responses of one class of adult, community college ESL students on three topics related to their metacognitive awareness about writing and themselves as writers. It does not provide the following:

> Comparison of an experimental and a control group of students who are not consciously being encouraged to develop their metacognitive awareness.

Correlation between students' responses to the three metacognitive topics and any standardized measures of skill in writing.

Correlation between cultural and L1 variables with student responses.

Since the literature does not provide data for the study of metacognition in an ESL writing class (to the best of my knowledge), this study provides preliminary data that might add to researchers', curriculum developers', and teachers' understanding of ESL writers' metacognitive awareness. Also, the data might illuminate further research in this area.

Definition of Terms

This section of the dissertation will define educational terms used in this text under the following subheadings:

Language Learning Terms
General Education Terms
College Terms
ESL Writing Class Syllabus Terms

Language Learning Terms

1. Target language is the language of study.

2. ESL is English as a Second Language. In this dissertation, ESL is the target language (or language of study) in a classroom within the United States. Using the term ESL presupposes that a student has greater fluency in at least one or more other languages.

3. L1 is Language One or First Language. In this dissertation, L1 refers to the native language or language of greater fluency of the student.

4. Second Language or L2 refers to any target language of study in any target culture for a population whose L1 differs from the target language. For example, Second Language in England or the United States refers to English and Second Language in France refers to French.

5. Foreign Language is a target language of study in a country where that target language is not the L1 of that country. For example, French is a Foreign Language in the United States and English is a Foreign Language in Sweden.

General Education Terms

1. Metacognition, in its most general sense, is "knowing about knowing" and "learning about learning." (ERIC Thesaurus) For further discussion of metacognition as used in this study, see Chapter II, "Metacognitive Approach."

2. Self-Directed Learning. "In its broadest meaning, 'self-directed' learning describes a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes." ". . .Self-directed learning usually takes place in association with various kinds of helpers, such as teacher, tutors, mentors, resource people, and peers." This is not "learning in isolation" (Knowles 1975, p. 18).

3. Andragogy is another term for self-directed learning, according to Malcolm Knowles (1975). Andragogy is defined as the "art and science of helping adults (or, even better, maturing human beings) learn" (Knowles 1975, p. 19). Furthermore, Knowles contrasts andragogy with "pedagogy," which he describes as "the art and science of teaching" with its tradition in the teaching of children and teacher-directed" learning (1975, p. 19).

4. Syllabus refers to "the subject matter content of a given course or series of courses and the order in which it is presented. . ." (Westphal 1979, p. 120).

5. Approach refers to "the theoretical basis or bases which determine the ways in which the syllabus is treated. . ." (Westphal 1979, p. 120).

6. Strategy or Technique is "an individual instructional activity as it occurs in the classroom" (Westphal 1979, p. 120).

College Terms

1. City Community College is the pseudonym for the college where this study occurred.

2. College Writing was a course required of all entering students of City Community College unless they were exempted after taking the college's writing placement test. This course carried credits which could be applied to graduation requirements.

3. Basic Writing was a course required of all students who received a low score on the City Community College Writing Class Placement Test. This level writing course has been termed "fundamental," "developmental," or "remedial" in various colleges and universities throughout the United States. For the purposes of this study, the term Basic Writing was used in keeping with the suggestion of Mina Shaughnessy (1976) that these students needed experience rather than remediation. As she explained in "Basic Writing," "remedial" would imply that the students were deficient, that they had received writing instruction and were found lacking. Thus, they would need remediation. However, what these Basic Writing students needed was experience in writing to prepare them for the college level writing they would encounter during their college career.

4. ESL Writing was a course for students whose first language was other than English and whose proficiency in written English was not sufficient for enrollment in either Basic Writing or College Writing at City Community College. ESL Writing was one of three advanced ESL courses at Level 3 that students generally took in their last semester. Completion of Level 3 ended their formal ESL studies.

ESL Writing Class Syllabus Terms

1. Writing Workshop is the term for the actual classes of ESL Writing Class, which followed a process approach to

writing instruction with practice in each step of the writing process within class time. This contrasted with a more conventional writing class that would devote class time to instruction "about" writing rather than "hands on" practice with writing.

2. Mini-Conferences during Writing Workshop were very brief discussions of between 1 and 5 minutes between a teacher and student about something very specific to the actual writing done by that student. The intent of these mini-conferences was to guide each student during each step of his/her writing process with the ultimate aim of self-direction or independence in writing for each student in the Writing Workshop (Moran 1983-1984).

3. Form in writing is defined as spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, or any other grammatical concerns in writing English expository prose.

4. Content is defined as the ideas which constitute the raw fabric of a paper.

5. Organization refers to the grouping of ideas and the order in which the content is presented.

6. Brainstorming is any technique for free generation of ideas without the imposition of critical judgment or selection. It is a "storm" of ideas which pours forth and is allowed to fall upon the page through the writer's pen, which leaves a record of the brainstorm for the teacher's and student's review. Brainstorming techniques used in ESL Writing Class are automatic writing, freewriting, mapping, and listing. (See this section numbers seven through ten for definitions of these terms.)

7. Freewriting is a brainstorming technique. The writer focuses on getting his/her thoughts onto the page without concern for form (Elbow 1973, 1981).

8. Automatic writing is another brainstorming technique. While the writer focuses on content not form as in freewriting, it is a specialized form of freewriting in that it is a timed, nonstop record of every thought that the writer penned to the page (Elbow, 1973, 1981).

9. Mapping is another brainstorming technique. The title of a topic is written in the center of a circle drawn in the middle of a page. Any ideas that come to mind are then written outside the space of the circle. In contrast to a linear list, mapping allows the writer to place ideas together that go together allowing for a "clustered list" of

ideas. Furthermore, Gabriele Rico (1983) in Writing the Natural Way suggested that this brainstorming technique encouraged the use of the whole brain (right and left hemispheres of the brain, which she related to creative and logical expression, respectively) thereby calling forth more ideas than might a linear type of listing (pp. 28-49).

10. Listing or a list is a linear record of ideas that students jot down during idea generation or brainstorming.

CHAPTER II

METACOGNITIVE APPROACH (REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE)

Introduction

This section of the dissertation will review both the major and significant influences on the metacognitive approach used in this exploratory study under the following subheadings:

Major Influences from Adult Literacy, Adult Learning Theory, and ESL and L2 Instruction and Research

Significant Influences from L1 Reading and Writing Instruction and Research

Each major and significant influence will be discussed along with its contribution to this exploratory study.

Major Influences from Adult Literacy, Adult Learning Theory, and ESL and L2 Instruction and Research

The major influences included the research and experiences of the following people in the following disciplines:

Adult Literacy (Paulo Freire)
Adult Learning Theory/Andragogy (Malcolm Knowles)
ESL and L2 Instruction and Research (Anita Wenden)

The above outline highlights particular people and disciplines; however, when relevant to the topic under review and discussion, additional work from the same or different disciplines will be cited also.

Adult Literacy

In his work with adult literacy in Third World countries, the Brazilian educator and philosopher, Paulo Freire (1981, 1982), utilizes student reflection as an essential component of literacy training. Students learn to become critically conscious, or introspective, and questioning of their environment and their interaction within it. Initially, they learn words loaded with deep emotional content which are basic to survival within their native culture. Students begin by "naming" their world. They name their "word universe"; these words become the source of discussions which stimulate reflection on the world. Reading and writing are never divorced from the world. "Praxis," defined as action-reflection-action, forms the foundation for learning to read and write. Action can include "actions" inside and outside of the literacy class such as speaking, writing, and rewriting as well as an overt political act, for example. In Freire's words, students not only read and write <u>words</u>, but they read and "rewrite" the <u>world</u> or transform their <u>world</u>. Metacognition is the core of these literacy classes: students learn and reflect on what they learn; students become self-directed learners through their increased self-knowledge.

Freire speaks of empowering students though this increased critical awareness of themselves and their world.

In Education for Critical Consciousness, Freire theorizes on the uniquely human potential for action and reflection that offers humans the opportunity to detach themselves from their experiences, review and analyze them, and consider ways to change them when warranted:

> Human beings are active beings capable of reflection on themselves and on the activity in which they are engaged. They are able to detach themselves from the world in order to find their place in it and with it. Only people are capable of this act of "separation" in order to find their place in the world and enter in a critical way into their own reality. "To enter into" reality means to look at it objectively, and apprehend it as one's field of action and reflection. It means to penetrate it more and more lucidly in order to discover the true interrelations between the facts observed. (Freire 1981, p. 105)

Freire believes that the development of critical awareness makes it possible for the learners to know their choices. He states that helping students achieve critical consciousness "avoid[s] a rote, mechanical process" in learning.

Through a critical awareness of their learning, students gain the potential to "teach themselves to read and write" (Freire 1981, p. 56). This ability to reflect upon their actions, to become active participants in their own learning, to perceive choices, to gain the ability to make choices through increased awareness of the "word" and "world," and finally the ability to act upon their choices is political. Students are participants in a democratic learning situation which could prepare them for a more

democratic approach to their lives. The individual engaged in this actively reflective educational process loses the "emotional resignation" and powerlessness of the "masses;" instead the individual becomes aware of his/her "conscious options" and capacity for "decisional participation:"

> As an active educational method helps a person to become consciously aware of his context and his condition as a human being as Subject, it will become an instrument of choice. At that point, he will become politicized. When an ex-illiterate of Angicos, speaking before President Joao Goulart and the presidential staff, declared that he was no longer part of the mass, but one of the people, he had done more than utter a mere phrase; he had made a conscious option. He had chosen decisional participation, which belongs to the people, and had renounced the emotional resignation of the masses. He had become political.
>
> (Freire 1981, p. 56)

In "The Importance of the Act of Reading" (1983), Freire "reaffirmed" his commitment to teach reading as "an act of knowing," a "creative act," and refused to "reduce learning to read and write merely to learning words, syllables or letters, a process in which the teacher fills the supposedly empty heads of the learners with his or her words." The student is aided by a teacher, of course, but this does not "annul" the student's creativity and responsibility for constructing his or her own written language and reading this language" (p. 10).

In his literacy work, Freire's approach harmonizes with other adult educators in English speaking countries who emphasize self-direction and independence of adult learners

(Knowles 1975, 1984, Thomas & Harri-Augstein 1977), L1 Basic Writing researchers (McCarthy, Meier, & Rinderer 1985, Shaughnessy 1977), and ESL educators who encourage self-direction of adult learners also (Curtin 1979, Wenden 1983, 1985, 1986a, 1986b). The theoretical assumptions of Freire and other adult educators were the underpinnings of this dissertation study which utilized reflection as an essential component in the ESL Writing Class. While Freire's approach encouraged reflection upon "words" basic to the student's culture, the approach of this study encouraged reflection not only upon the "words" used in their papers in their self-evaluation work, but their feelings about writing, and their thoughts about themselves as writers. Similar to Freire's approach in his emphasis on "praxis," students acted (that is, they wrote), reflected (thought about the writing they had done), and acted again (rewrote, revised, wrote another paper, and made decisions about what to do to learn). Similar to Freirian andragogy, the approach utilized in this study explored the reflective process, or metacognitive awareness, of students in an attempt to engage students in an active, creative process leading them toward, not dependence on the teacher as "pourer of knowledge," but decisional participation in their own learning process and independence.

Adult Learning Theory: Andragogy

The work of Malcolm Knowles (1975, 1984), adult learning educator and theorist, was influential in the decision to explore the metacognitive awareness of ESL writing students. Also, Knowles' suggestion that an educational approach ("medium") harmonize with its goals ("message") in the adult classroom was cogent in the attempt to find an appropriate approach for teaching ESL student writers, an approach this study explored. The methodological approach and syllabus of the ESL Writing Class and the study's participatory research style harmonize with each other as well as with the andragogical approach to teaching advocated by Knowles. The following is a summary of Knowles' assumptions in developing his andragogical model for teaching adults (1984, p. 55-61):

> 1. Need to Know: adults need to know why they are learning what they learn.
>
> 2. Self-Concept: adult learners' self-concept is self-directing in areas outside of school. Even though adults' previous school experiences may have been teacher-directed, an adult educational environment which does not foster student self-direction in the school environment could create psychological conflict between a student's image of him/herself outside of school and within the educational setting. The adult learner may react to this psychological conflict by fleeing or dropping out from school.
>
> 3. Role of Learners' Experience: adults have heterogeneous life experiences thus teaching needs to be individualized.

4. Readiness to Learn: adults are ready to learn what they need to know and be able to do in order to cope with real life situations.

5. Orientation to Learning: adults' orientation to learning is life-centered, task- or problem-centered, not subject-centered.

6. Motivation: adults are not only motivated by external pressures such as getting a better job, but, perhaps even more so, are motivated by internal pressures such as the desires for increased job satisfaction, self-esteem and improved quality of life.

Knowles (1984) thinks that adult educators sometimes neglect to provide experiences suited to adult learners in the course syllabus; he feels that the medium of teaching can provide an important part of its message. In teaching adults, an adult approach or medium is warranted:

> This is to say that an organization is not simply an instrumentality for providing organized learning activities to adults; it provides an environment that either facilitates or inhibits learning. (Knowles 1984, p. 97)

In the discussion of his theoretical rationale for his andragogical approach in Self-Directed Learning: A Guide for Learners and Teachers, Knowles provided a model which encouraged self-direction of adult learners. He spoke of an "essential aspect" of "maturity" being the development of "the ability to take increasing responsibility for our own lives--to become increasingly self-directing (1975, p. 14)." Furthermore, he stated that those who take the initiative in learning learn "more and learn better, than do people who sit at the feet of teachers passively waiting to be taught.

. ." (p. 14). Active learners who possess initiative learn with more purpose, have greater motivation, tend to retain what they learn longer, and make better use of what they learn than do more passive learners (1975, p. 14). Knowles continually advocates that teachers of adults teach these learners how to learn (to become more self-directed and to "learn about learning" and "know about knowing"). In other words, Knowles advocates that students increase their metacognitive awareness.

Sympathetic to the andragogical model presented by Knowles, Elinor Lenz in "Special Learning Problems of Adults," underlined this emphasis on the development of metacognitive awareness in adult learning situations:

> Remember that what most adults need above all else, is to learn how to learn. Anything you can do to help them become more competent learners will enrich your teaching as well as their learning experiences. (1982, p. 31)

Knowles (1984) believes that the teaching environment should be an "educative environment" that allows students the opportunity to share the responsibility for their own education. Such an environment would include the following components (1984, p. 97):

1. respect for personality
2. participation in decision making
3. freedom of expression and availability of information
4. mutuality of responsibility in defining goals, planning, and conducting activities and evaluating

In giving respect for student personality and allowing opportunities for freedom of expression, a teacher needs to consider affective as well as cognitive variables within the classroom. In providing an "educative environment" with a student-centered approach, Knowles suggests that the teacher seek to understand from a student's point of view. Feelings are part of that student view; one cannot divorce feelings from education. Thus, "confluent" education (G. Brown 1975) would incorporate within the syllabus both the affective and cognitive in educating (Knowles 1975).

Knowles' adult (andragogical) approach to adult learning provided the foundation for many aspects of this exploratory study. The methodology of the ESL Writing Class was conference-centered with a process approach to writing and provided an opportunity for students to "learn how to learn" to write through opportunities to reflect on their learning. This metacognitive awareness could lead them toward independence in learning. In this study, ESL learners discussed their attitudes toward writing, their writing identity, and their self-evaluations of themselves as writers. In discussing attitudes towards writing, ESL students considered not only the cognitive but the affective or emotional variables in learning to write. In discussing their self-evaluations, their decisions about their writing strengths and needs, and steps to take to improve, students practiced self-direction in learning. The participatory

style of research allowed for the mutuality of responsibility between the teacher-researcher and each student-participant. Furthermore, the writing conferences or semi-structured interviews, which allowed for individual discussion between teacher and student, also allowed for individual differences in adult students. In addition, they provided an opportunity for student self-reflection and self-expression through oral articulation of their feelings and thoughts about writing and themselves as writers.

ESL and L2 Instruction and Research

A major influence from the discipline of ESL and L2 instruction and research was Anita Wenden (1986a), who researched the language learning beliefs of adult ESL learners at the American Language Program of Columbia University. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and classroom exercises were devised so that students would reflect upon their individual belief systems about learning ESL. Wenden saw the value of reflection in its surfacing of beliefs about learning:

> The value of activities in which younger and older adults reflect upon their beliefs about language learning lies in the fact that such activities can surface for examination, evaluation, and possible change or modification of the expectations that adult learners bring to their language learning.
>
> . . .The point is, however, that adult students will come into the classroom conditioned by their previous educational experiences, and that these experiences should be taken into account if one

> wishes the language learning/teaching task to be a co-operative endeavor. (Wenden 1986a, p. 9)

Wenden's questions about students' language learning beliefs reached beyond present and previous classroom "educational experiences" into students' "educational experiences" in social settings outside of school. Her intent was not just to learn about ESL learner beliefs about language learning and to encourage metacognitive awareness, but also to facilitate self-direction, autonomy, or independence in students. Wenden utilized four major categories in classifying students' processes for self-directed learning and noted the aspect of language learning attended to during these student reflections (1983, p. 11):

> 1. Diagnosing Language Proficiency: How am I doing? (Learner's performance attended to)
>
> 2. Self-Analyzing (Personal factors): How am I responsible for my learning? How is language affecting me? (The learner attended to)
>
> 3. Evaluating: What am I getting out of this? (Learning strategies, techniques or activities attended to)
>
> 4. Planning: What should I learn and how? (Linguistic objectives and resources attended to)

In "Literature Review: The Process of Intervention," Wenden (1983) called these categorized processes of metacognition or learning about learning the "processes of intervention," which she defined as "how learners intervene consciously in their own learning" (p. 103). Wenden's interest was in students developing "learning" strategies,

as contrasted with "communication" strategies (which language learners also may use to develop greater communicative competence):

> Learning strategies are defined as steps or mental operations used in learning or problem-solving that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials in order to store, retrieve, and use knowledge. Communication strategies refer to techniques learners use when there is a gap between their knowledge of the language and their communicative intent.
> (Wenden 1986a, p. 10)

Wenden believed that students' use of their conscious processes (their reflections about learning) could lead them to discover ways to intervene positively in learning (1983, p. 105). In her later work, Wenden aligned this metacognitive approach to ESL instruction with the self-directed learning that Malcolm Knowles advised for adult learners (Knowles 1984, 1975, Wenden 1986a). This is consistent with her earlier view that the development of conscious learning strategies and self-directed learning were "overlapping concepts" (1983).

Wenden thought that this "thinking about learning" (termed metacognition by cognitive psychologists) empowered students by giving them a measure of control over their own learning:

> As experience will have demonstrated to most of us, some language learners come to the task of language learning with highly refined metacognitive skills. In their case, thinking about their beliefs might help them to further clarify and label what they already know. Many others, however, have developed their

> metacognitive abilities to a much lesser degree. Activities that help them reflect on their learning and articulate their unstated beliefs should help them develop these metacognitive skills and, consequently, allow them to assume more control over their learning.
>
> (Wenden 1986a, p. 10)

Wenden's attitude towards metacognition in the ESL classroom is shared by five InterAmerica Research Associates (O'Malley et al 1986) in "Learning Strategies used by Beginning and Intermediate ESL Students." These researchers suggested that continued advances in metacognitive awareness in ESL instruction "should permit students to learn second languages more efficiently" and "enable them to capitalize on available instruction" (p. 43). In the following admonition, these researchers emphasized their belief in the educational benefits of increased metacognitive awareness:

> Students without metacognitive approaches are essentially learners without direction and ability to review their progress, accomplishments, and future learning directions.
>
> (O'Malley et al, p. 24)

In her work on the learning of English as a Second Language, Anita Wenden designed modules for use as classroom metacognitive activities. Modules introduced ESL students to the "importance of diagnosing their language problems, evaluating the outcome of their learning activities, setting forth objectives, and learning to deal with feelings (other metacognitive skills)" (1986a, p. 10). ("Feelings" or emotions as a metacognitive topic of this study will be discussed later in this chapter in relation to the

significant influences from L1 literature [Brand and Powell 1986].) According to Wenden, the usefulness of these modules was not only in aiding students, but perhaps in serving as a guide for teachers as they developed a course for their ESL learners:

> In other words, the modules can be useful in raising students' awareness about the learning skills necessary to help them become more active and diversified learners. At the same time, these activities could serve as a diagnostic tool for classroom teachers. They will provide them with valuable insights into their students' beliefs about learning and their preferred learning strategies. Such data could serve as a guide in the choice of activities they devise for further helping their students "learn how to learn" a second language. (Wenden 1986a, p. 10)

In an article in Language Learning: A Journal of Applied Linguistics, Wenden (1983) concluded that teachers would benefit from utilizing "learner training" or teaching students how to learn within their classrooms.

> Efforts towards devising programs and materials to train learners should be continued. There is a need for curricular strategies, techniques, and materials to provide training that would not only expand learner's repertoires of efficient strategies but also make them aware of various aspects of their language learning and critically reflective of what they are aware--in effect, to refine the reflective phases of their language learning. Effective means should be devised for evaluating the impact of such training endeavors. Finally, the data collection techniques that have been devised for the gathering of learner self-reports should be made available for the use of classroom teachers so that practitioners may themselves, gain insight into their students' learning and, at the same time, provide these students with the opportunity to reflect upon, critique, and refine their approach to learning. (Wenden 1983, p. 117)

Wenden's study served as a model for researching ESL learners' beliefs about language learning in this study which focuses on learning to write rather than general language learning. Her ideas have been adapted to ESL writing instruction. Students in this study reflected upon processes of self-directed learning adapted from Wenden's categories of diagnosing cited in this section on ESL Instruction and Research: "language proficiency, self-analyzing, evaluating, and planning." In this study students also reflected on their feelings about writing in L2. This exploratory study explored what surfaced as students reflected upon their writing and themselves as writers so that this researcher might gain insight into these ESL students' learning from their perspective, which is in keeping with the student-centered approach of Freire (1981), Knowles (1984), and Wenden (1986a, 1986b). Following the suggestion of Wenden (1983, p. 117), through a metacognitive approach, new curricular strategies, techniques, and materials were explored. At the same time, the participatory style of research used in this study sought to provide students with an opportunity to reflect upon, refine, and critique their approach to learning.

Significant Influences from L1 Reading and Writing Instruction and Research

The significant influences included the research and experiences of the following people from L1 reading and writing instruction and research:

- Kindergarten and Elementary School Reading and Writing Research (Judith Solsken)
- Remedial Reading and Writing Instruction (Masha Rudman)
- College Writing Instruction and Research (Charles Kay Smith, Charles Moran, Alice Brand, and Jack Powell)
- Basic Writing Instruction and Research (Patricia McCarthy, Scott Meier, and Regina Rinderer)

The above outline highlights particular people and disciplines; however, when relevant to the topic under review and discussion, additional work from the same or different disciplines will be cited also.

Kindergarten and Elementary School Reading and Writing Research

The work of Professor Judith Solsken, formerly Gourley, (Gourley 1983, Gourley et al 1983) was influential in asking students to describe themselves as writers, one topic which was explored for developing the metacognitive awareness of the ESL students in this study. In her work with young children, Solsken identified the establishment of a writing identity as a crucial step for fledgling writers. In a long-term study that followed the progress of the participants over a three year period, Solsken researched

the writing experience of kindergartners who were encouraged to "invent" their own spelling in their initial writing about their own experiences. "Invented spelling" consisted of individual letters or groupings of letters that represented words and/or sentences. In this way, a young child was able to create a story that she/he could read aloud to others.

From the moment the reader understands how to read any printed symbol, Frank Smith (1982a) acknowledges that the person is a already a reader, who will continue to learn to read by reading more. To Frank Smith, experiencing reading is the most important part of the reading process. From the moment Solsken's kindergartners produce a symbol to represent a word, they are writers. Both Solsken and Smith believe in the importance of experiencing what one is learning. Therefore, the reader begins to read and the writer begins to write while refining their skills. Guidance is a part of the learning process but experience is the greater part. So the new reader reads and the new writer writes. The use of "invented spelling" made writing possible almost immediately for kindergartners and young elementary school children.

Not only did Solsken's kindergarten writers practice writing in the classroom, but they spoke to others about their work in an "author's circle." The "author's circle" allowed these new literates to orally present their written

work to their peers, a practice that publicly acknowledged the students' identity as writers and also encouraged development of an individual writing identity (or self-concept) for each learner. Solsken saw these kindergartners' awareness of themselves as writers as an essential step in advancing their newly acquired writing skills. To openly acknowledge one's writing identity in an "Author's Circle" somehow acknowledged that capacity to write. This seemed to have a positive effect in motivating the young student to write more. After the young writer became conscious of him/herself as a writer, the new writer was a writer learning to write better, not someone who was trying to learn to write but had not accomplished this yet--much like the beginning reader who is already a reader in the eyes of reading theorist and researcher, Frank Smith (1982a).

Out of a desire to allow reluctant ESL writing students to write almost immediately grew the utilization of prewriting techniques such as automatic writing, freewriting, and mapping. The use of these techniques freed students to write almost immediately similarly to "invented spelling," which freed kindergartners to write shortly after learning the alphabet. Out of a desire to generate a sense of writing identity in beginning writers of ESL grew the interest in the research topic devoted to students' describing themselves as writers. In asking students to

describe themselves, the intent was to encourage them to think of themselves as writers, since they had indeed been experiencing writing in English for the duration of the ESL writing class.

Remedial Reading and Writing Instruction

Another significant influence on this study was Professor Masha Rudman (1982, 1987), who insisted upon acknowledging the strengths of students having difficulty in learning to read or write. Rudman also was concerned about students retaining autonomy and actively participating in their own learning. Furthermore, she thought the material used should have meaning in the context of students' lives outside the classroom.

Building on what students knew would capitalize upon skills students possessed before attending to their needs. Furthermore, Rudman insisted that future reading and writing teachers practice acknowledging students' strengths first, since teachers often neglect strengths because they are busy "troubleshooting" by perceiving and acknowledging errors--or to use the preferred expression of Rudman, by perceiving and acknowledging <u>needs</u>. Rudman refused to say a student had "weaknesses," which could imply a lack that might not be "curable," but insisted on saying that a student had needs which could be worked upon for improvement and, furthermore, that specific steps could be taken to address that need

(Rudman 1982, Gambrell & Wilson 1973). Thus, the seeds were sown for acknowledging both students' strengths and needs in asking adult ESL students to self-evaluate themselves as writers in this study.

College Writing Instruction and Research

Significant influences from the discipline of college writing instruction and research will be discussed including the work of Professors Charles Kay Smith (1974, 1984) and Charles Moran (1983-1984) from the University of Massachusetts Writing Program and the research of Alice Brand and Jack Powell (1986), as reported in their article, "Emotions and the Writing Process: A Description of Apprentice Writers."

In his presentation, "Writing and Thinking," a workshop for Basic Writing and College Writing instructors, Professor C. Kay Smith (1984) emphasized the thinking part of writing and strongly advocated that instructors make time in class for this essential part of the writing process. In his work with college writers, Smith used short reading assignments to stimulate thoughtful writing. Before students would even read the passage or short story that Smith assigned, he presented them with a series of questions which called for answers in a sentence or two. These questions were designed to lead students in a step-by-step fashion toward discovering and perhaps questioning the assumptions

underlying the assigned reading. After students wrote answers to these questions during class, there would be class discussion to stimulate further thinking. After these preparatory exercises, students would read the assignment and write a short paper about it. After experiencing these prewriting exercises and writing a number of papers in response to the assigned readings, students would be expected to utilize a similar process independently in their writing work later in the semester.

Professor C. Kay Smith would allow class time for students to practice thinking, which was intended to lead students toward using this prewriting approach in their future college writing. In Styles and Structure: Alternative Approaches to College Writing, Smith states one of his andragogical assumptions about his approach to teaching college writing: " . . . [that] patterns of writing enact patterns of thinking [and] that by finding and practicing different ways of writing we can literally think different things" (1974, p. ix).

Smith's theoretical bases for his classroom andragogy appear similar to Freire's when one considers how student reflection is an integral part of both Smith's college writing classes (1974, 1984) and Freire's adult literacy classes (1981, 1982). In short, both Smith and Freire advocate creating thinkers by leading students toward the discovery and perhaps questioning of assumptions, toward

discovering greater choices through this reflective process, and toward becoming more independent learners.

In this study, students were not reflecting upon assumptions in regard to assigned readings; however, they were reflecting upon themselves as writers from the first day of one semester to their last conference which was their final assignment for the ESL Writing Class. In asking questions about students and their writing throughout the semester, one intent was to stimulate thinking by ESL students and to give them the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings in both written and oral form as Smith (1984) advocated in his "Writing and Thinking Workshop." While their responses formed the data for review and analysis of their metacognitive awareness or self-direction for this study, their reflections (responses to their own experience) were also an integral part of the ESL Writing Class.

Professor Charles Moran, the director of the University of Massachusetts Writing Program was influential in the decision to explore a curriculum that would encourage self-direction on the part of writing students. Moran's approach to teaching writing secured a firm place in this study for students' reflections about strengths and needs in their own writing. In his "Writing Colloquia" presentations for Basic and College Writing instructors, Moran advocated a conference-centered, process-oriented approach to writing

instruction. According to Moran, it benefited writing students to experience writing and one-to-one mini-conferences during a writing workshop. He also suggested that instructors and students meet at the instructor's office for individual dialogues between the student and the instructor. Each student's writing would be discussed during a private conference at least two times a semester--at mid-term and again during final exam week. These conferences were intended as guidance, but the emphasis was on an instructor leading a student toward independence in revising his/her papers by drawing this awareness out of a student writer with brief questions which encouraged the student to think about his/her own writing in a "critical" way--that is, by acknowledging both the strengths and needs and next steps particular to the student paper in question.

Moran did not use "strengths," the terminology of Rudman (1983), but would describe writing as "effective," would show a student what in their writing "worked," or would comment directly upon the content or ideas presented. For example, in commenting upon a description of a person, Moran might pick out a sentence that was "effective" (or that "worked") in that particular paper and say, "In this sentence, I can see the person you describe." In this way, Moran would help a student see his/her specific strengths in that paper.

In this study with students enrolled in ESL Writing Class, the conferences were adapted from some of Moran's ideas. Students experienced a conference-centered approach to writing instruction while practicing or experiencing writing during a writing workshop. (See the "Classroom Methodology" section for a more detailed description of ESL Writing Class.) Students met with the instructor for individual conferences not only at mid-term and during final exam week, but during the first few weeks of the semester. The format of the conferences differed from Moran's but at least part of each conference was devoted to encouraging each student to look at his/her writing in a "critical" and reflective way--acknowledging strengths and needs and next steps. (See Appendix A for summaries of the three conferences.)

An important influence in the decision to include attitude as a component in this study of the metacognitive awareness of ESL writers was the research on college writers by Alice Brand and Jack Powell (1986). Brand and Powell's research was a systematic study of emotions in students' writing processes. Their study of a total of 87 L1 college writers enrolled in both introductory psychology courses and undergraduate English classes observed the change in emotions during the writing process and reviewed which variables were associated with emotional intensity and emotional change. In "Emotions and the Writing Process: A

Description of Apprentice Writers," Brand and Powell report on the background to their study:

> Research and personal experience demonstrate the unique capacity of the emotions to disable or enable human activity. In general, boredom slows people down. It is also associated with slower thinking. Anxiety is crippling, but it can also arouse. Enjoyment energizes, but so does anger. Because emotions are implicated in virtually all human behavior, there is every reason to believe that emotions play a central role in the writing process as well as in writing abilities. This research reports a first systematic effort to describe the emotions involved in writing.
> (Brand & Powell 1986, p. 280)

The results showed that positive emotions increased during writing and, as expected, skilled writers had more positive emotions than unskilled writers. In their discussion of their findings, Brand and Powell stated that emotions changed significantly when students were writing and that positive emotions intensified while writing. Part of their findings also suggested the following:

> . . .that the way students feel about themselves as writers accurate or not, is more personally meaningful than that information from their instructors. (1986, p. 284)

They found that students who perceived themselves as skilled felt significantly less "Negative Passive" both before and after writing than those who saw themselves as unskilled. (The term "Negative Passive" is a category of emotion during the writing process which includes confusion and boredom.) Furthermore, Brand and Powell correlate this student self-perception (or self-reflection) with their ability to engage

themselves in the act of writing and with more positive emotions during that writing experience:

> Perhaps writers who consider themselves skilled become more readily engaged in composing and thus experience decreasing boredom and confusion as they move through the process. (1986, p. 283)

Brand and Powell's findings are not surprising in that skilled writers experienced more positive emotions during the writing process; however, their research findings suggest that further research may show how emotion influences the way writers function and how particular "affects" may "be recruited for effective writing performance" (Brand & Powell 1986, p. 284).

According to the research of Lynn Bloom (1980), anxious college writers would benefit from writing methods which offer students control over their writing experience:

> The teaching of composition as a flexible process that admits of considerable variation, rather than emphasizing perfected prose models as the result of a rigid, oversimplified process, can help writers--anxious or otherwise--to gain control over their writing. Control implies exercise of judgment, a realistic appraisal of one's capabilities and deficits as a writer. Control also implies a willingness to act to overcome one's writing problems rather than be devastated by them. Ultimately, control implies skill as a writer, based on knowledge of what to do and how to do it, rather than on a legacy of self-denigration. Control is maturity. (p. 55)

Foreign Language, ESL and L2 researchers concur in the belief that affective variables including emotion or feelings and motivation (Bailey 1983, H. Brown 1980, Curran 1982, Savignon 1972, Krashen 1982) are related to

performance in language learning (Gardner and Lambert 1959, 1972, Gardner 1985, Schumann 1980), but the actual direction of influence and the causal relationship is complex and uncertain (Oller 1981).

The above L1 and L2 researchers acknowledged a part of student writing experience often neglected in the classroom: attitude, which involves emotion or affect. Brand and Powell's research, which reported on emotions involved during the writing process of L1 college writers, ensured a place for acknowledging the attitudinal component in ESL learners' writing experience, equated with the affective variables of the Foreign Language, ESL, and L2 researchers cited above.

Basic Writing Instruction and Research

The work of McCarthy, Meier, and Rinderer (1985) was influential in requesting that students evaluate themselves as writers in this study. In a sense, a request for self-evaluation is a request for students to practice self-direction and to assert some control over their own learning (Freire 1981, Knowles 1975, 1984, Thomas & Harri-Augstein 1977). McCarthy, Meier, and Rinderer's study attended to students' self-evaluations or "perceptions" of their writing skills in relation to their actual performance in writing. They concluded that how one thinks about oneself as a writer is related to one's written production. Their research

suggested that student's (positive self-evaluations ("perceptions of their own efficacy") may encourage them to utilize more alternatives in writing and increase their persistence (p. 466). Students' negative self-evaluations of themselves and their capabilities might "lead them to use limited rhetorical strategies because they would not see themselves as being capable of anything complex" (p. 469). To them it was not a simple causal link:

> There is no simple causal link, however, between self-evaluation and performance. When performance improves, belief in one's abilities increases. . .when belief increases, performance improves. [One's perceptions of one's own efficacy can] affect what behavior people will attempt in the first place and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles.
>
> (1985, p. 466)

Students with strong efficacy (positive self-evaluation) were better writers, and less anxious writers were better writers (p. 469). Since student's perceptions of their writing skills seemed related to their actual writing performance, these researchers suggested that it would be appropriate in further research to expand the concept of 'self-evaluation' to include "evaluation of one's writing abilities as well as assessment of one's written work" (p. 470). Future research on both aspects of self-evaluation--evaluation of writing abilities and assessment of one's written work--"may aid in understanding how one's thinking about one's writing affects one's ability to produce good writing" (p. 470).

In this dissertation study, ESL students were asked to take "charge of their own writing" (McCarthy et al 1985, p. 467) and not just depend entirely on their teacher. The results of research conducted by Patricia McCarthy, Scott Meier, and Regina Rinderer with a total of 90 college freshmen basic writers indicated that "evaluation of one's writing abilities is connected with the quality of written products" (1985, pp. 468-469). They further stated that this ability to evaluate one's writing may be related to the ability to have internal control over one's life:

> . . .authors who report the value of encouraging writers to take charge of their own writing may well be urging the same behavior that psychologists advise when they suggest that people assert internal control of their lives.
> (1985, p. 467)

This dissertation study explored ESL students' reflections of their abilities and their assessments of their writing, equated within this study with their metacognitive awareness of their writing and themselves as writers, including both cognitive and affective variables. The semi-structured interviews or conferences of this exploratory study allowed a dialogue between teacher and student about writing and students' reflections of themselves as writers. This self-reflection and opportunity for self-awareness provided an opportunity in the ESL Writing Class for self-expression of their writing "world" in their own "words" (Freire 1981). Perhaps, this provided

an opportunity for the development of a more positive self-image for student writers thereby encouraging them to "persist in the face of obstacles," as McCarthy, Meier, and Rinderer suggested would be the positive result of a more positive self-evaluation.

Summary of the Metacognitive Approach (Review of the Literature)

Multidisciplinary influences helped shape this study in its emphasis on reflection and choice of specific metacognitive topics in relation to writing: attitude (affect), writing identity (self-concept), and self-direction including self-evaluation and planning. Because such diverse influences helped shape this study, this subsection will summarize the major and significant influences and their particular contributions in relation to the design of this exploratory study in metacognition. A classroom methodology for ESL student writers considered suitable to the metacognitive approach of this study will be described along with the relevant literature in the next chapter, "Classroom Methodology."

Metacognition was at the core of adult literacy classes (Freire 1981, 1982, 1983) where students developed "critical consciousness" through reflection upon their learning. According to Freire, students became self-directed through their increased self-knowledge and become capable of reading

and writing words as well as reading and "rewriting" or transforming their world. In keeping with the aims of an "andragogical" or adult pedagogical approach (Knowles 1970, 1975, 1984, Freire 1981, 1982, 1983), the intention of the metacognitive approach of this study was to explore the reflective process (or metacognitive awareness) of students and to engage them in an active creative process leading them toward decisional participation in their own learning.

An "educative environment" as defined by Malcolm Knowles (1984) would mean respect for personality or individual differences including affective variables (1975, G.Brown 1975), decisional participation, freedom of expression and availability of information, and mutuality of responsibility through active participation in defining goals, evaluating, and planning (Knowles 1984, p. 97). The participatory research approach ("mutuality of responsibility") and open-ended questioning ("freedom of expression," "active participation," and acceptance of individual differences) served to provide an "educative environment" as defined by Knowles.

In her research on general ESL learning, Anita Wenden not only attempted to learn about ESL learner beliefs about language learning but also to encourage metacognitive awareness and facilitate self-direction, autonomy, and independence in students. Wenden thought that students' use of conscious processes (reflections about learning) could

offer them the potential to "positively intervene" in their own learning, thereby participating in self-directed learning (1983). She classified four major categories of students' processes for self-directed learning: (1) diagnosing their language proficiency, (2) self-analyzing (personal factors), (3) evaluating learning strategies, techniques and objectives, and (4) planning (1983).

For the purposes of this study, metacognitive activities similar to Wenden's were adapted to writing instruction, providing student-participants with opportunities to surface beliefs for examination, to self-evaluate, and to plan. A student-centered (Freire 1981, Knowles 1984, Wenden 1986a, 1986b) participatory research approach provided the teacher-researcher with data that was potentially insightful for researchers and provided students with opportunities to reflect upon, refine, and critique their approach to learning (Wenden 1983).

With prewriting exercises that stimulated thinking and questioning of assumptions, C. Kay Smith's L1 college writing students were led toward the discovery of choices through the reflective process and toward becoming more independent learners through this reflective process (1984). Reflection was an integral part of the ESL Writing Class as well as an integral part of this exploratory study in metacognition. In this study, rather than reflecting on assigned readings (Smith 1974, 1984), opportunity was

continually given for students to practice reflecting and responding to their own writing.

In Charles Moran's (1983-1984) conference-centered, process approach to L1 college writing instruction, conferences were intended as guidance, but the approach emphasized leading a student toward independence. In this study, conferences or interviews were modified from the ideas of both Moran and ESL researcher, Wenden (1983). Topics during the conferences or interviews included both the metacognitive topics relevant to general ESL (Wenden 1983) and particular to writing instruction (Moran 1983-1984).

L1 college writing researchers, Alice Brand and Jack Powell (1986) and Lynn Bloom (1980) indicated that emotions played a central role in the writing process as well as in writing abilities. Furthermore, the way students "feel about themselves as writers, accurate or not, is more personally meaningful than that information from their instructors" (Brand & Powell 1986, 284). While affect and motivation have been correlated with performance (Gardner and Lambert 1972, Gardner 1985, Oller 1981, Schumann 1980), the relationships seem to be dynamic and bidirectional rather than static, linear, or causal (Oller 1981). Because of the above research that indicated the importance of affect, an essential part of this dissertation study was the metacognitive topic devoted to attitude or affect.

Judith Solsken (Gourley 1983, Gourley et al 1983), an educator and researcher in reading and writing instruction, observed young students "experiencing" writing using "invented spelling" and reporting on writing in an "author's circle." Experiencing or active participation was paramount to learning (Gourley 1983, F. Smith 1982a). These activities were used to encourage early acknowledgement of fledgling readers and writers as readers and writers. Besides providing a vehicle for gathering data for this present study relevant to the topic of writing, student's reflections devoted to descriptions of themselves as writers served as encouragement of the development of a writing identity (self-concept). In addition, experiencing writing within the Writing Workshop and reporting on written and oral reflections about their writing throughout one semester provided L2 adult learners with experiences that also served as encouragement for the development of writing identity.

McCarthy, Meier, and Rinderer's study (1985) suggested that "evaluation of one's writing abilities [a student's self-evaluation] is connected with the quality of written products" and that less anxious students were better writers (p. 469). According to these researchers, the relationship between affect and performance appeared similar to that cited previously (Brand & Powell 1986):

> There "is no simple causal link, however, between self-evaluation and performance. When performance improves, belief in one's abilities increases. . .when belief increases, performance improves. (McCarthy et al 1985, p. 466)

They suggested that students' negative self-evaluations might limit the diversity of rhetorical strategies attempted while positive self-evaluations might enhance students' willingness to attempt diverse rhetorical strategies and strengthen their persistence (1985). The ability to evaluate one's writing seemed similar to behavior associated with with the ability to have internal control over one's life (McCarthy et al 1985, p. 467).

This dissertation study explored both cognitive and affective self-evaluations. Self-evaluation focused on both "strengths," "needs," and "next steps" (Rudman 1982, 1983, Gambrell & Wilson 1973) or, to use other terminology, "effective writing," ineffective writing, and "planning for revision" (Moran 1983-1984). Thus, self-evaluation and self-direction were integrally connected. One metacognitive topic, attitude towards writing, allowed "surfacing" of attitudes (Wenden 1986a), especially those which may have been "negatively disabling" (Brand & Powell 1986) such as anxiety (McCarthy et al 1985). The surfacing of beliefs and subsequent reflection and dialogue could serve to encourage self-confidence (Brand 1987) and allow other positive changes for students (Freire 1981, 1982).

CHAPTER III

CLASSROOM METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In the following two subsections, this section of the dissertation will describe ESL Writing Class, review the relevant literature, and discuss the theoretical rationale for the classroom methodology utilized:

Description of ESL Writing Class
Review of the Literature and Theoretical Rationale for a Conference-Centered, Process Approach in a Writing Workshop

Description of ESL Writing Class

ESL Writing Class was one of three courses given to Level 3 ESL students in preparation for mainstreaming into other City Community College courses. ESL students took three ESL courses with the same instructor five days a week for one semester. The first two ESL courses, Grammar 3 and Reading and Conversation 3, met for 50 minutes each five days a week. The third ESL course, ESL Writing Class, met for 50 minutes for three days each week.

In this section, ESL Writing Class will be described under the following subheadings:

Traditional Format
Adaptation to Process Approach
Writing Workshop and Journals
Conference-Centered Approach
Metacognitive Components

Traditional Format

The stated goals of the writing course, according to the ESL department, were the following:

1. To improve writing skills so the student can progress to college-level courses.
2. To be able to write a paragraph that has a main idea, expansion of that idea, and a closing.
3. To be able to write an essay of at least 3-5 paragraphs.

Thus, ESL Writing Class followed a traditional format designed to prepare students for Basic Writing or College Writing at City Community College. Students were given practice in writing various types of paragraphs and essays, such as explanation or instruction, description, narration, and definition.

Adaptation to Process Approach

Within the above City Community College ESL department's stated goals and class structure, the ESL Writing course was adapted to a process approach which was conference-centered with metacognitive components incorporated into the traditional syllabus. The adaptation of the traditional ESL writing course included providing a workshop approach during each 50 minute class, where students wrote each type of paragraph in class.

The process approach meant that students moved through various processes or steps in writing these paragraphs and

essays: brainstorming, mapping, automatic writing, freewriting, listing, organizing, first drafts, and subsequent drafts.

Writing Workshop and Journals

ESL Writing Class followed a workshop structure: students did all of their writing on their paragraphs during class. This included moving through the processes or steps outlined in the brief explanation of the process approach to writing instruction outlined above. Concurrent to practicing writing during class in the writing workshop, students wrote in journals for homework and wrote in automatic writing booklets in the three ESL classes: Grammar 3, Reading and Conversation 3, and ESL Writing Class. See Appendix B for handouts pertaining to the course syllabus.

Conference-Centered Approach

The course was also adapted to a conference-centered approach. During each Writing Workshop (each writing class), each student had a mini-conference with the instructor in order to dialogue with and receive guidance about specific aspects of his/her writing during the process. Conferencing was extended beyond the Writing Workshop for three formal sessions: beginning, mid-term, and final.

Metacognitive Components

In addition to work on the types of paragraphs designed to prepare students for entry into mainstream City Community College courses, metacognitive components were incorporated into the syllabus by oral and written questions on topics designed to allow students' reflection upon their writing and themselves as writers. The metacognitive topics students responded to were the following: attitude towards writing (affects, feelings, or emotions), describing oneself as a writer (writing identity), and student description of writing strengths and needs and steps to take to improve (self-direction, self-evaluation, and planning). See Appendix A for samples of conferences and handouts, which were used for collecting data for this study.

Besides being a topic of this dissertation study, metacognition was an integral part of the ESL Writing Class; therefore, each of the 18 students enrolled in this class participated in each aspect of the course: its traditional components, its process and conference-centered approach, its homework and in-class assignments, and its assignments calling for written and oral response to metacognitive topics.

Review of the Literature and Theoretical Rationale for a Conference-Centered, Process Approach in a Writing Workshop

Since influences from the literature related to the metacognitive components of the ESL Writing Class have been discussed previously in section Chapter II, this section will focus on the conference-centered, process, and writing workshop approach with the inclusion of specific brainstorming techniques utilized within the ESL Writing Class. The theories of the following researchers and educators from the fields of L1, L2, ESL, and Basic Writing instruction and cognitive psychology will be discussed in relation to the classroom methodology used in ESL Writing Class:

Donald Murray (L1)
Vivian Zamel (ESL)
Mina Shaughnessy, Sara Stelzner and Marcia Curtis (Basic Writing)
Roger Garrrison, Peter Elbow, Gabriele Rico (L1)
Stephen Krashen (L2)
Lev Vygotsky (Cognitive Psychology)

The theoretical rationale of the classroom methodology will be discussed in this section under the following subheadings:

Process Approach
Conference-Centered Approach
Workshop Approach
Idea Generation
Lowering the "Monitor" to Increase "Comprehensible Input"
Summary of Theoretical Rationale

Process Approach

Experts in the literature on writing instruction seem to agree that inexperienced writers often are unaware of the customary process approach to writing that successful writers use. In A Writer Teaches Writing, Donald Murray (1968) made certain the inexperienced writer realized that this crucial draft-by-draft approach to writing is utilized by most professional writers. To this end, Murray presented samples of early drafts of famous speeches, poems and sections of books complete with the crossings out and rewordings in the margins and in the spaces above and below the original text. As a way to reinforce his argument for a process approach to L1 writing instruction, Murray even let the reader know just how many drafts and hours it took him to write his book.

In "The Composing Process of Advanced ESL Students: Six Case Studies," Vivian Zamel (1983) advocated using the process approach to writing instruction with ESL students also. In her discussion of the writing process itself, Zamel explained that writing is an act of discovery but inexperienced writers think that writers know beforehand just what they want to say:

> . . .Writing is a process of discovering and making meaning. Through the act of writing itself, ideas are explored, clarified, and reformulated and as this process continues, new ideas suggest themselves and become assimilated into the developing pattern of thought.

> However, unskilled and beginning writers rarely experience writing as a cyclical process of generating and integrating ideas. Rather, because they do not understand this process, they are convinced that writers know beforehand what it is they will say. (p. 166)

As late as 1983, Zamel felt that ESL instruction was focusing primarily on form not process in writing. She advocated more attention to the development of content in ESL composition classes, allowing time for editing for form to come during the final drafts of a paper. Attention to form too early in the writing process would be detrimental to the generation of ideas and perhaps discourage attention to content and the communicative purpose of writing:

> While process centered studies have already had an impact on [L1] writing instruction. . ., ESL composition teachers, researchers and textbook writers have by and large paid little attention.
>
> ESL writing continues to be taught as if form preceded content, as if composing were a matter of adopting preconceived rhetorical frameworks, as if correct language usage took priority over the purposes for which language is used. (Zamel 1983, p. 67)

Another adult ESL writing instructor, Ann Raimes (1980) echoed this dilemma of ESL students who need freedom for expression of creative ideas as well as close attention to form and structure in writing:

> If we concentrate on free composition, we concentrate on invention; if we concentrate on controlled composition; we concentrate on syntactic structure (style); if we concentrate on analyzing readings and working with a model, we concentrate on rhetorical structure (arrangement). We need to find a way to work on all three aspects, to let students invent and organize their

> own ideas while they practice the rhetorical and syntactic structures of English. (p. 391)

According to Mina Shaughnessy (1977), most basic writing students (whether exclusively ESL or native-English speakers) are accustomed to passing in a final writing product which the instructor then reads, comments upon and grades. From the instructor's viewpoint, the comments could be helpful for a student as encouragement and/or guidance in writing the next student paper. However, from the students' viewpoint, the final product (the completed paper that was handed in to the instructor) is not in need of change or revision. Shaughnessy believed that the drafting process needed to be an integral part of the writing class.

In a "process approach" to writing instruction, it is assumed that the draft the instructor reads will not be perfect, polished or finished and instruction and guidance will continue on that paper until it is deemed sufficiently close to standard edited English and college-level expository prose as necessary at the stage of the student writer at the time of writing. Thus, requests for revision become integral parts of the writing classroom, not failure or punishment (Shaughnessy 1977). Shaughnessy commented further on the customary practice in a writing course not oriented towards a process approach to writing instruction:

> When the writer moves from spoken to written discourse, he faces a formidable task of synthesis. At this point, he needs the help of

> his teacher or expert tutor who can serve . . .as another pair of eyes and another set of responses.
>
> But teachers customarily "correct" papers rather than read them. Whereas the ordinary reader tries to understand what he is reading, the writing teacher. . .tries to see what keeps the paper from being understood or accepted. Unfortunately he habitually makes this evaluation after the student has finished his paper, not during the composing process. Like most writers, the student reaches closure on what he has written once he put it into circulation (that is, into the teacher's hands for grading). . .apprentice writers tend to gloss over the painstaking corrections and suggestions of their teachers because they can not mobilize themselves to work on something they regard as finished. The teacher may view a theme pedagogically as a stepping stone to the next theme; the student, however, like most writers, is more likely to regard the work he has just completed as a discrete creation, important for itself but not particularly interesting when viewed in the context of his "works" for the semester. (1977, p. 84)

Because an inexperienced writer may not realize that most writing is not done in one draft, a process approach within a writing workshop gives students the opportunity to discover this through their own classroom experiences. According to Mina Shaughnessy in "Basic Writing" (1976) and Sara Stelzner and Marcia Curtis in "Teaching Basic Writing Teachers" (1985), only by allowing students the opportunity to spend class and homework time on the process with draft-by-draft guidance can instructors hope to impress upon inexperienced basic writers this knowledge of the usual process approach to writing (Moran 1983-1984).

In ESL Writing Class, students revised their papers through numerous drafts, focusing on just one or two aspects of writing in each revision. Roger Garrison in his unpublished manuscript, Teaching Writing: An Approach to Tutorial Instruction in Freshman Composition, stated that it helped inexperienced writers if only one need for improvement was worked on at a time in each draft of the students' papers. Peter Elbow (1981) in Writing With Power also suggested that students focus on different level revisions in different drafts (p. 252-254). Both Elbow and Garrison's order and levels for revisions could be categorized as follows: content, organization, sentence-level needs and word-level needs. Students in this study revised for these four categories of writing needs. (See Appendix B "Checklist for Revising" for elaboration of these categories.)

Conference-Centered Approach

A conference-centered approach to writing instruction harmonizes with the process approach. Conferences within a writing workshop (mini-conferences) and individual conferences at the instructor's office provide a vehicle for requests for revision, guidance, comments, and student-teacher dialogue. Mina Shaughnessy (1977) stated that

fruitful commentary could occur during a student's writing process:

> If the teacher is to act as editor rather than reviewer, he needs to confer with the student while his paper is in progress. (p. 84)

Individual mini-conferences within the ESL writing workshop of this study allowed for language interaction about writing between the teacher and student. It also allowed for comprehensible input in the form of teacher response to students' writing and questions about writing. Response by "capable peers" (Vygotsky 1978) and teachers served as guidance for the inexperienced ESL basic writer. Without guidance by capable peers or instructors, learning to write remains a mysterious and often frustrating experience for most inexperienced or basic writers, according to Mina Shaughnessy in Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing (1977). The Russian cognitive psychologist, Lev Vygotsky (1978), theorized that learning could be enhanced through a cooperative or collaborative approach in the classroom. Surpassing the level of achievement possible through just independent study, the student could potentially expand his/her "zone" of development to a higher level with the aid of "capable peers" or "adult guidance" (pp. 79-81).

According to Zamel (1983), an approach such as a conference-centered, process approach which incorporates individual guidance based on individual needs "is especially

warranted when we are dealing with ESL students who are seemingly quite advanced by virtue of their class placement and their oral language skills, but whose writing may reflect a different situation entirely" (p. 183). Zamel advocated working on writing problems as they arise since this allows teachers to "address individual needs" while allowing students to "teach us what they need to know" (p. 183). She did not ask ESL teachers to neglect "language-related" concerns but to engage in "dialogue" with students about both their "writing" and "language" needs:

> . . .by studying what it is our students do in their writing, we can learn from them what they still need to be taught. All of this, of course, applies no less to language related concerns. Through the interaction that is shared by writers and their readers, it is possible to discover the individual problems students have with reference to syntax, vocabulary, and spelling. (1983, p. 182)

Workshop Approach

A workshop approach to writing instruction allows class time for students to go through a writing process and to conference about their work during each step of the process. While a writing workshop which incorporates mini-conferencing involves close interaction between the teacher and student, the ultimate aim of such an approach is to lead student writers towards independence. Through their own experiences within the writing classroom, it is theorized that they will discover their strengths and needs and learn

strategies for successful writing. According to Zamel, through mini-conferencing or teacher-student dialogue such as "one-to-one conferences," students may begin to incorporate this "teacher-reader voice in their own interaction with texts":

> . . .The instruction they are then provided is truly effective feedback, based upon their real needs rather than a syllabus, curriculum, or textbook that by its very nature cannot take these individual needs into account. (1983, p. 182)

Idea Generation

Besides using a conference-centered, process approach in a writing workshop, students utilized techniques or strategies which encourage idea generation and focus on content in contrast to form in ESL Writing Class. Oftentimes, ESL students lack confidence in writing in their second language, which inhibits the creative expression of ideas necessary to develop a paper. One obstacle to success that inexperienced student writers often face is "writer's block," which could be described as an inability to write because of fear or lack of confidence in one's ability to succeed at writing. For ESL learners, this "writer's block" is often exacerbated by the lack of fluency with English in comparison to their first-language. Thus, inexperienced writers either can not think of "anything" to write or are slowed down in their writing; that is, they produce little or nothing in the class time allotted for them to write.

In order to circumvent this lack of confidence and facilitate the generation of ideas, certain brainstorming techniques such as mapping, automatic writing, and freewriting were utilized as suggested in the results of a pilot study by this researcher (Mountainbird 1986). One brainstorming technique which encouraged students to write without fear or worry about their lack of skills in English was mapping or a clustered list.

Gabriele Rico (1983) in Writing the Natural Way suggested that this style of brainstorming encouraged the use of the whole brain, thereby calling forth more ideas than a more linear type of listing of ideas might (pp. 28-49). This mapping could serve an an encouragement for students to begin writing down their ideas, rather than keeping them locked or "blocked" in their heads. In this way, writing in English can begin even for the most severely "blocked" or insecure ESL writer.

Other techniques which will be used in order to get students' thoughts moving and recorded on paper rather than remaining locked or "blocked" in their brains are "freewriting" and "automatic" writing. "Automatic writing" is a specialized form of "freewriting," both of which are advocated for writers by Peter Elbow in Writing Without Teachers (1973) and Writing With Power (1981). Elbow sees both techniques as loosening-up exercises which can be practiced daily by any writer. In both techniques,

automatic writing and freewriting, content or idea-generation (getting one's thoughts onto the page) is the focus rather than the form of writing. Elbow stressed that inexperienced writers could be aided by the freewriting experience--whether it is freewriting as part of the initial brainstorming process or another variation of freewriting, such as automatic writing.

Freewriting allows unskilled ESL basic writers the freedom to get their thoughts down on the blank page that formerly intimidated them. Their thoughts appear on the page quickly enough to allow the creative expression of their ideas without the inhibition created by their self-imposed monitor of correct grammatical usage. Freewriting allows students to write words that become a concrete record of their thoughts. Their words--evidence of their thinking process on a topic--remain in full view for them to observe and utilize in writing.

Lowering the "Monitor" to Increase "Comprehensible Input"

The logic of reducing inhibition to increase language interaction introduced in Stephen Krashen's theory of second language acquisition in "Applications of Psycholinguistic Research to the Classroom" (1983) could be applied to writing as well as speaking in L2. Automatic writing and freewriting are techniques which can be used to lessen the "monitor" or self-inhibitor preventing production of both

spoken and written English and, therefore, "comprehensible input" (language interaction) by L2 or ESL learners. In his work, Stephen Krashen advocated a focus on communication within the classroom that encouraged production of spoken language without the inhibition that constant editing for form imposed on beginning second language learners. Brainstorming techniques such as mapping, automatic writing and freewriting could allow for production of written language without initial monitoring or self-editing for form. Simply put, if a student is editing his/her speech for correct form, then he/she can not speak quickly enough to converse comfortably with a native-English speaker. In Krashen's words, when the comprehensible input is increased, students will interact more with the target language. This actual language interaction and practice is what will most help the student increase his/her skills in the second language more than any other component of classroom "instruction" (Krashen 1983). In his emphasis on practice and interaction with language, in contrast to conscious learning "about" language, Krashen's theory of second language acquisition is in harmony with current psycholinguistic theory. Currently, psychologists, sociologists and educators collectively theorize on first-language learning, diverse cultures, and cognitive processes of humans in acquiring any knowledge. Language learning is

seen as a useful model for observation and analysis (Vygotsky 1972, 1978, Mellon 1980, Moskowitz 1978, H.D. Brown 1980).

In summary, Krashen encouraged instructors of beginning ESL to create a language-interactive classroom setting which encourages oral production of language without imposing monitors necessary for self-correcting for form (Krashen, 1983). In a similar vein, if ESL learners feel free to write as well as speak the second language without the inhibition of monitoring their writing for form in the beginning stages of writing and throughout the writing process, they will write more. They will produce and practice the target language, English, rather than allowing their own self-monitoring process to inhibit their "creativity" in language (F. Smith 1982b, Krashen 1984). Until students feel free enough to express their ideas and "communicative messages," these ideas and messages will remain locked within their "inner speech" (Vygotsky 1972), disallowing effective written communication. Until ESL students actually write something (create "output"), "input" such as oral or written reader response ("comprehensible input") cannot take place.

Summary of Theoretical Rationale

The process approach is helpful for inexperienced writers to practice writing as a process of discovery and

making meaning (Murray 1968, Zamel 1983, Shaughnessy 1977). Attention to content first can encourage ESL writers who often lack confidence in their writing ability in L2 (Mountainbird 1986). Attention to form too early in the writing process may be detrimental to idea generation.

Conferences allow for fruitful oral dialogues between instructors and students and immediate guidance from the instructor (Shaughnessy 1976). Conferences encourage increased language interaction and comprehensible input (Krashen 1983). Learning can be enhanced though a cooperative or collaborative approach (Vygotsky 1978), which conferences permit. Working on writing problems in conferences allows teachers to address individual needs and allows students to articulate felt needs as they arise (Zamel 1983).

A workshop approach allows class time for students to practice writing using a draft-by-draft approach. It allows for immediate guidance and feedback from the teacher, and allows students to discover this customary approach of experienced writers through their own classroom writing experience (Moran 1983-1984, Shaughnessy 1977, Stelzner & Curtis 1985).

When revising, it helps to consider one category of writing needs at a time (Garrison, Elbow 1981). Using techniques which stimulate idea generation, such as automatic writing and freewriting (Elbow 1973, 1981) and

mapping or a clustered listing (Rico 1983), allows students to focus on communicative intent and content first. Furthermore, the use of idea generation techniques early in the writing process creates a classroom environment that can lower the "affective filter" and prevent the overuse of a "monitor" early in the writing process (Krashen 1983). Thus, a language-interactive situation is created within the writing workshop that encourages practice using language (written) and increased written language output which provides a basis for increased "comprehensible input" (oral or written reader response) for students.

The process approach, conference-centered approach, writing workshop approach, and brainstorming techniques all encourage student thinking and rethinking or reflection. Thus, the classroom methodology used harmonizes and synthesizes with the metacognitive research approach utilized in this exploratory study.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

This section of the dissertation will describe the research design in the following subsections:

Participant Research Model
Data Collection
Data Analysis
ESL Population

Participant Research Model

The model for research for this dissertation was qualitative and participatory. The participant research model was chosen because it seemed most appropriate for an exploratory study in metacognition in ESL writing. In this section, potential advantages as well as possible disadvantages of this method will be discussed and the positive aspects of participant research in an educational setting will be summarized under the following subheadings:

Modification of Phenomena Studied
"Objectively Subjective" Research
Humanistic Approach
Concluding Thoughts

This study was qualitative in that it was an in-depth study of student-participants' verbatim oral and written accounts of their reflections on thoughts and feelings about their writing and themselves as writers. According to James Spradley (1980), the participant observer who engages in

qualitative and participatory research has two purposes in a social situation: "to engage in activities appropriate to the situation" and "to observe the activities, people, and physical aspects of a situation" (p. 54). This study was participatory in that the teacher-researcher both engaged in activities appropriate to teaching and observed the social situation of the ESL Writing Class in relation to metacognitive awareness. Thus the teacher-researcher was both participant and observer, "insider and outsider" (Spradley 1980).

According to Walter Borg and Meredith Gall in Educational Research (1983), a participant observer gains insights nearly impossible to achieve through any other research method. One can become part of the group studied and thereby have the opportunity to develop interpersonal relationships which allow for freer expression of the participants with the researcher. In her research with ESL writers, Vivian Zamel (1983) cited similar reasons for conducting research with her students: greater rapport with students and an extensive knowledge of what they were doing in the writing class which allowed for collection of rich and elaborate data. Furthermore, Jeanne Chall (1986) in her review of the literature of teachers as researchers in Reading Teacher speculates that teachers as researchers can bring "reality and classroom know how to educational research" while bringing "excitement" to teacher-researchers

in learning more about their students and their learning process, an approach "that will help them inspire their students to learn" (p. 794).

Modification of Phenomena Studied

According to Borg and Gall (1981), one potential disadvantage of participant research is the possibility of this participation and observation significantly modifying the phenomenon being studied. In contrast to this view, Reason and Rowan believe an essential goal of participatory research is modification or change; research which involves dialogue serves a dual purpose: the data collection useful for a knowledge base about the participants and intervention or change as a result of involvement by participants in the research process. The change however is not imposed on the participants but may happen in the process of inquiry or reflection by the participants (p. 293). Engaging in reflection and "delayed introspection," as ESL students did in this study, could have been a factor in changing their thoughts and feelings about writing and themselves as writers. However, any research method of observation or questioning of any population might be a factor in changing the thoughts and feelings of that population.

Through their oral and written reflections, students in this study had an opportunity to articulate their thoughts and feelings in relation to writing. Any increased

metacognitive awareness due to participation in this study could be seen as an advantage due to the participatory nature of the research and educational processes in ESL Writing Class. Another advantage could be the contribution to student-participants' learning processes based upon a theoretical assumption of this study that increased metacognitive awareness could contribute to students' learning processes (A. Brown 1982, Elbow 1973, Freire 1981, Knowles 1975, McCarthy et al 1985, Wenden 1983, 1986, Wilson 1985).

"Objectively Subjective" Research

Another possible disadvantage of participant observation cited by Borg and Gall (1983) is the potential lack of objectivity and the potential emotional involvement of the participant researcher (p. 490). In contrast to this, Peter Reason and John Rowan (1981) in Human Inquiry see the "primary strength" of this type of research in its "emphasis on personal encounter with experience and encounter with persons" (p. 242). The experiences and encounters may have a subjective side to them but the record keeping, description, and analysis can be objective (Reason & Rowan 1981, Borg & Gall 1983). The entire process is "objectively subjective," according to Reason and Rowan. The data for this study was collected from written and audiotaped verbatim accounts of students rather than notes

or summaries by the researcher, which could be subjective. Such exact record keeping was objective, while the in-depth experiences in class and during conferences were subjective.

Furthermore, in any data description and analysis whether quantitative or qualitative, any selection of what data to describe and any decision on how to analyze the description would entail both objectivity and subjectivity. According to Reason and Rowan, research of any type has effects that potentially change that being researched:

> (1) Research can never be neutral. It is always supporting or questioning social forces, both by its content and by its method. It has effects and side-effects, and these benefit or harm people.
>
> (2) Even the most static and conventional research discovers and exposes rigidities and fixed patterns, which are thus enabled to change. This is so whether such change is intended or not. (1981, p. 489)

In "Writing Instruction: New Insights from Ethnographic Research," Evelyn Freeman, Janet Samuelson, and Tobie Sanders (1986) discuss writing research done in an ethnographic style, of which participant-research is one example. Even though the researcher may sometimes become emotionally involved with his/her participants, the rich description can result in greater understanding for educators:

> The ethnographer's task then is not to "prove" anything, as much as to understand it. . . It is description that creates understanding. Therein lies the richness of the ethnographic approach to research: its bountiful demands, and equally

> bountiful rewards for researchers, teachers, and ultimately for students.
>
> (Freeman et al 1986, p. 11)

Subjectivity and emotionalism in the sense of personal involvement between the researcher and participants could be viewed in a different light. Personal involvement between student-participant and teacher-researcher could mean greater rapport and access to more information from students. Then participatory methods could be a route to the most clear, rational, holistic, pragmatic, and realistic--and therefore the most objective--view of humans in an educational situation.

Humanistic Approach

The intent of this study was to develop insights and understanding of ESL learners, complex human beings who are becoming "new literates" in their second language. In his report on new L1 literates in Tanzania, Yusuf Kassam (1979) spoke of the qualitative approach to research:

> The investigation of such personal and qualitative changes in the people can best be illuminated by adopting an "anthropocentric" approach which involves the interpretation of reality exclusively in terms of human values and human experience.
>
> (p. 11)

Voicing a view similar to this researcher about the goals of teaching students to write in ESL, Kassam (1979) saw the goals of literacy as humanistic, people-centered, and liberating. He also believed that the process of adult

literacy was an "intensely emotional experience." His research interest was in the "personal and qualitative realm of people's own thinking, their own feelings, their own vision, and their own perceptions about the changes that may have occurred in themselves and their situation" (p. 11).

Concluding Thoughts

In conclusion, the advantages of participatory research seemed to outweigh any potential disadvantages. Modification of the phenomena studied (or educational intervention) could be seen as essential goals of participant research (Reasons and Rowan 1981). "Objectively subjective" research could access rich and elaborate data (Freeman et al 1986, Reason & Rowan 1981, Zamel 1983). The personal and qualitative realm could elicit data valuable in the interpretation of human behavior (Kassam 1979).

Borg and Gall (1983) also concluded that, when used in educational settings, the positive aspects of participant observation outweighed any potential disadvantages (p. 491). Additional positive aspects Borg and Gall cited were, first, that the "quality of direct on-site observations" may be exceptional since it is difficult for participants to "mask" what is actually going on from the researcher. For example, this contrasts with the use of a questionnaire only. Second, "freedom of access" to information is assured since the researcher is a participant within the educational

setting. Third, the "intensity of observation" increases since the researcher is present on-site for numerous hours throughout the period of observation. Finally, several different methods of data collection are possible in participant observation, such as direct observation, collection of everything that students write in-class and for homework, and audiotaped records of everything participant-students say during individual conferences with the teacher-researcher (1983, p. 491).

Data Collection

In this exploratory research, all 17 ESL students enrolled in ESL Writing Class were asked to think about their writing and themselves as writers, since metacognition was considered an integral part of the class as well as the topic of this research study. Since permission for inclusion in the study was granted by 16 students, only 16 will be paraphrased or quoted in the text of this dissertation. During one semester, through various means, students were asked to provide oral and written answers to questions about their attitude towards writing, their descriptions of themselves as writers, and their evaluations of their writing skills. For the complete wording of all the questions including detailed summaries of the three audiotaped conferences and all the handouts assigned for written responses used in collecting data for this study,

refer to Appendix A. Data collection will be described more completely in the subsections that follow:

Instrumentation (Metacognitive Topics)
Preliminary Procedures
Interviewing Apprenticeship
Interviews and Written Assignments
Variety of Methods and Perspectives
Summation of the Data Collection

Instrumentation (Metacognitive Topics)

Wenden's questions for ESL learners (1982) were adapted for a writing class and designed to include metacognition in the syllabus of ESL Writing Class. The following are four major categories of students' processes for self-directed learning classified by Wenden: "diagnosing language proficiency, self-analyzing, evaluating, and planning" (1983, p. 111). The various means of feedback on these categories for this exploratory study were the following: three formal individual conferences or interviews, written homework and in-class automatic writing or freewritings in response to the questions, individual in-class mini-conferences, and relevant written responses in homework or class.

Briefly stated, at the beginning, middle and end of one semester's enrollment in ESL Writing Class, students were asked to respond in both oral and written form to the following three questions. Wenden's categories are in

parentheses along with the categories of other significant influences on the metacognitive approach to this study.

1. What is you attitude toward writing? How do you feel about writing? ("Self-analyzing") (Emotion, Brand and Powell 1986, Brand 1987a)

2. How would you describe yourself as a writer? ("Self-analyzing" and "diagnosing language proficiency") (Writing Identity, Gourley 1983, Gourley et al 1983)

3. What are your strengths and needs in writing? ("Diagnosing language proficiency") (Evaluation, McCarthy, Meier, and Rinderer 1985)

   How can you capitalize upon your strengths and how can you address these needs? (What steps can you take?) ("Evaluation " and "Planning") (Self-direction, Freire 1981, Knowles 1984)

In addition, at the beginning of the semester, students completed the following introductory questionnaires:

1. Basic Information Questionnaire
2. Student Questions about Writing Class
3. Student Ideas Questionnaire
4. Writing Experience:
   4a. ESL
   4b. L1
5. Awareness of Own Process:
   Steps You Take When Writing

See Appendix A for samples of the above questionnaires.

Preliminary Procedures

Preliminary procedures that will be discussed in this subsection include an earlier pilot study and formal requests for access to the research population. In preparation for this present study, a pilot study was

conducted by this researcher with one university basic writing class of 18 students with special attention to the responses of six of the ten ESL student-participants in that pilot study (Mountainbird 1986). That pilot study provided information used to design this present study and also provided an apprenticeship in interviewing for this researcher. The basic writers were asked to reflect upon their attitudes towards writing as well as what had facilitated learning to write. Decisions in research design relating to classroom methodology including specific writing techniques, research approach, and metacognitive topics were based on the findings of that pilot study as well as on experiences with other ESL students learning to write.

Access to the population and permission from the participants were also preliminary to the research. The director of a community college ESL program granted access to the research population and agreed to a preliminary interview in which she described the general ESL population. The immediate ESL supervisor also granted permission for the classroom methodology used, which included the written responses and interviews related to the metacognitive topics for this study. Written permission was granted by 16 of the 17 students enrolled in ESL writing class. The seventeenth student had withdrawn from the course before written permission had been requested and could not be contacted later to request permission.

Since metacognition was an integral part of the ESL Writing Class as well as this exploratory study, each student had participated in every aspect of the course for the duration of his/her enrollment in the class. However, only those 16 who gave written permission for inclusion in the study have been paraphrased or quoted within the text of this dissertation.

Interviewing Apprenticeship

Before interviewing student-participants for this present study, this researcher extensively studied and practiced procedures for interviewing. The work of the following researchers relevant to participant research in general and interviewing in particular was reviewed: Agar (1980), Borg & Gall (1983), Egan (1983), Friedman (1978), Goss (1983), Kinsey (1985), Lofland (1971), Patton (1980), and Spradley (1980). Close attention was also paid to the questioning and probing methods outlined by Allen Ivy in Intentional Interviewing and Counseling (1983). Reports on listening and nonverbal communication were also reviewed (Egan 1983, Hall, E. 1969, 1959, Lucas 1983, Lundsteen 1971, Myers & Myers 1976).

Relevant studies in teaching writing were also reviewed as previously cited in the review of the literature sections. Selected studies relevant to writing instruction and/or ESL participants which utilized interviewing for data

collection were also reviewed (Halstead 1981, Kahler 1983, Kassam 1979, Miller-Cleary 1985, Schleiderer 1979) with particular attention to the work of L2 researcher Anita Wenden (1982, 1986a, 1986b).

Interviews and Written Assignments

The actual semi-structured interviews or conferences and written assignments used in this exploratory study will be discussed in this subsection. In preparation for each of the three conferences, students wrote responses to written questions which gave them time to reflect upon their thoughts and feelings before coming to an individual interview or conference. With permission from each individual student, the researcher audiotaped and later transcribed each interview.

During the interviews, students engaged in "delayed retrospection," since they were reflecting upon thoughts and feelings about "experiences that had occurred some time before the interview" (Wenden 1982, p. 32). The interview sessions were guided by a semi-structured format for the following reasons outlined by Wenden (1982) in her L2 study:

> I chose the semi-structured interview because it allows for in-depth probing while permitting the interviewer to keep the interview within the parameters traced out by the aim of the study. In other words, it allows for flexibility within a certain structure. (p. 39)

These interviews allowed students to get clarification about questions from the researcher and to orally articulate in depth about their reflections. Since student-participants explained and elaborated upon their attitudes, evaluations, and planning in dialogue and in negotiation with the teacher-researcher, these interviews could also be considered conferences.

Besides written assignments in preparation for the interviews, other assignments were used to collect data. In order to get students to write down their ideas a variety of methods were employed, which have been described in a previous section entitled "Classroom Methodology." Particularly significant for collecting student reflections were automatic writing and freewriting techniques as defined within this study. Automatic writing done for three to five minutes allowed student-participants to freely express ideas without concern for form of language which otherwise could have inhibited them in their responses. Even though student-participants often felt their English was not proficient enough for more formal written expression, these techniques allowed them to comprehensively express their ideas in writing. At first, student-participants responded in automatic writings of free-associative responses with seemingly unrelated or isolated words or phrases which came to mind when they wrote without pausing. Students responded in a relatively uninhibited manner, which allowed this

researcher to get a glimpse of the "unmonitored" (Krashen 1983) or unedited reflections.

Freewriting assignments also provided a relatively unmonitored view of student-participants' reflections. As they became more comfortable with expressing ideas in writing, they utilized freewriting, which contrasted with automatic writing in that short pauses were acceptable. Also in freewriting they were encouraged to write in sentences or near-sentences. When freewriting, their sentences were also usually more closely related before they began to write about a new idea. Still, freewriting allowed brainstorming of ideas without the restrictions that the usual linguistic transitions and editing for form place on free expression of ideas by inexperienced writers.

Other written assignments for collecting reflections, besides automatic writing and freewriting, included homework assignments such as journal writing, which generally were freewritings with some editing for spelling and other errors in form. The homework assignments provided responses that were more edited and monitored but which often also indicated more thinking and rethinking or reflection.

Variety of Methods and Perspectives

The variety of methods and perspectives utilized in collecting the data contributed to the validity (Borg & Gall 1983) of the qualitative, participant research project. For

example, students answered all of the questions outlined in the subsection above, "Instrumentation: Metacognitive Topics," more than three times in writing and/or during discussion in an interview. Throughout the semester, exact questions were repeated or purposely rephrased. In addition, students responded to the research topics orally and in writing at least three times throughout the semester with more than three intervening weeks between most responses.

For example, student-participants responded to the first topic, "What is you attitude towards writing?," in a three-to-five minute automatic writing during the third week of class and in either a five-minute automatic writing or freewriting the eighth week of class. Students also answered the same question orally during the first and second interview. In addition, students responded both orally and in writing at the time of the final interview. Thus, students responded to this question during Weeks 1, 3, 8, and 16 for a total of six times--three times in writing and three times orally.

Student-participants also viewed the same questions from various perspectives. For example, the second topic, "How would you describe yourself as a writer?," was purposely rephrased and viewed from different perspectives throughout the semester. For example, during the first interview, students were asked to think of a word or a few

words that might describe them as writers in order to introduce them to the concept of a writing identity. In a homework assignment given during the third week, students listed anything they had written in English. The goal of this assignment was to encourage students to acknowledge any writing skill in English.

Midsemester, one homework assignment asked students to imagine and describe an excellent writer in order to stimulate reflection about what qualities an excellent writer would possess. Before assigning the topics for the final essay and final interview that went with it, the students as a group did an oral brainstorming about qualities that an excellent writer possessed, and handouts of a mapping of their brainstorming session were given to them before the final interview. The intent of this exercise and handout was to give the student-participants a full list of terms or vocabulary of qualities for their reflection in preparation for the topic of writing identity during final interview.

For the written assignment in preparation for this final interview topic, student-participants wrote about one quality of an excellent writer that they thought they also possessed. This topic was also discussed orally during the final interview. Thus, the topic of writing identity was viewed from various perspectives: in a general way at first, in the light of possible qualities of another writer, in

terms of overall listing of qualities of any successful writer, and from the student's self-perspective or self-concept.

The third topic, concerned with self-direction including evaluation and planning, was also approached from various perspectives throughout the semester and discussed both orally and in writing. As an introduction to self-direction during Week 1, students wrote in automatic writing or freewriting style about their ideas for and questions about ESL Writing Class. Later, during Week 8 they also wrote about this same topic. During the third interview, students orally expressed suggestions for future writing classes, further practice in self-direction and planning.

As an introduction to self-direction in evaluation and planning, students answered questions in the first interview about what they "could do," what they needed to "work on" in writing, and what they "could do to make learning to write easier" for themselves. In preparation for the second interview, they had been given a checklist for assessing strengths and needs and were asked to look back at their ESL Writing Class workshop papers to aid them in their reflections. See the appendices for the student handouts given in preparation for the self-evaluations: Appendix A "Mid-Term Self-Evaluation" and Appendix B "Checklist for Revising."

In order to begin reflecting upon writing in these specific ways, student-participants wrote lists of their writing "strengths," writing "needs," and "steps to take" to both capitalize upon strengths and work on "needs." Students listed as many as six strengths and as many or more needs. During the interview itself, each of these topics was addressed in the order cited in Appendix A, "Summary of Conference 2." In order to use the techniques of encouragement as suggested by Rudman (1983) and Gambrell & Wilson (1973), the strengths and the planning associated with strengths were discussed first. In dialogue, the instructor and student clarified and elaborated upon the topics and clarified, elaborated upon, and corroborated about the planning.

For the third interview, in a manner similar to the second interview, students self-evaluated and self-directed themselves again by selecting one writing strength and one need to reflect upon both orally and in writing.

Summation of the Data Collection

All written assignments and interviews on metacognition were compiled in individual student-participant folders, totaling at least 80 pages of data for each participant who completed every assignment and attended each interview. The three interviews, totaling at least 125 minutes or just over two hours, included a 20-minute first interview, a 60-minute

second interview, and a 45-minute third interview. These figures represent the minimum time spent since most of the interviews took longer than this stipulated time.

The single-space, typewritten transcription of all three interviews comprised at least 30 pages of the 80 pages of data. Student reflections collected for all 17 students enrolled in ESL Writing Class, including the four who did not complete the course, totaled over 1,200 pages of data. The analysis of these student reflections will be discussed in the next section, "Research Design: Data Analysis."

Data Analysis

The data analysis will be discussed in this section under the following subheadings:

Introduction
Language of the Participants
Preliminary Categories
Detailed Stages of the Data Analysis
Summary of the Data Analysis

Introduction

A content analysis was done of the data in stages. In order to analyze the data, preliminary categories were chosen with which to review the data. Then the content of the data collected was reviewed for categories representing patterns and themes that emerged in the responses of the participants. In brief, the content analysis of qualitative data necessitated the following:

> . . .a painstaking process requiring long hours of careful work, going over notes, organizing the data, looking for patterns, checking emergent patterns against the data, cross-validating data sources and findings, and making linkages among the various parts of the data and the emergent dimensions of the analysis. (Patton 1980, p. 297)

Following the content analysis, a description of the data collected was formulated and will be presented in the next chapter, which describes the findings of this study.

Language of the Participants

During the content analysis, decisions had to be made regarding the language used by the participants. In order to maintain the integrity of student-participants' responses, nonstandard word order, vocabulary, or other nonstandard grammatical structures were retained as much as possible. However, in order to clarify meaning for potential readers unfamiliar with the nonstandard English often used by ESL students, spelling and punctuation were often corrected. Also, omissions or alternatives in vocabulary and grammatical structures were sometimes put into brackets within the cited text.

Preliminary Categories

There could be no description or analysis without underlying assumptions with which to first classify or categorize the data. A review of the literature disclosed

educational assumptions as described in earlier sections of this dissertation entitled "Introduction: Assumptions" and "Metacognitive Approach: Major Influences." Even though not all of these categories were used in the final analysis, the data was initially reviewed for the following categories used by Freire (1981, 1982, 1983, 1985a, 1985b) and Knowles (1970, 1975, 1984):

Self-direction or lack of it
Empowerment
Need to Know
Self-concept
Role of learners' experiences
Readiness to learn
Orientation to learning
Motivation

Detailed Stages of Data Analysis

The data analysis took place in various stages. Shortly after receiving written responses from student-participants and after each interview of each participant, the written responses were read and reread and the audiotapings were played while this researcher took notes on them. After collecting all the data during this one semester, all the interviews were replayed once again, and then replayed again and transcribed. After each transcription, the interview was replayed again at least once. Thus, after each interview had been recorded, it was listened to at least four times while searching for patterns

and themes mentioned above in the introduction to the data analysis and those that emerged from the data itself.

During the next stage of the analysis, the folders of half the participants containing all the written and transcribed responses were reviewed and the contents were organized. Quotations were cited and notes taken on large index cards in the following thematic categories that surfaced when reading the participants' responses:

Attitude
Description of writing qualities
Metacognitive awareness when self-evaluating
    Improvement in skills
    Increased self-confidence
    Empowerment

Once on index cards, these quotations and notes were compiled and categorized in various ways to further discover additional emerging patterns and themes.

In order to get another perspective concerning the emerging patterns and themes within the text of the interviews and other responses, an outside reader, who was a professional writing instructor uninvolved with the research process until this time, was then solicited to read and review the data.

After the interviews had been transcribed, the interviews and written responses of the participants were also xeroxed on paper coded in a different color for each participant to assure tracing of a citation to a particular participant. These color coded copies allowed for cutting

and organizing the transcriptions and other responses into sections according to patterns and themes. Sections of these colored xeroxed pages were cut and stacked according to similar content in the emergent categories. These responses, stacked by categories, were then read again for any new patterns which emerged from their texts.

Thus, through the particular stages for content analysis which have been briefly described, categories were formed that related to each topic of this study. Then all responses related to each category were compiled by these categories onto a word processor and then reviewed again. Through this process of content analysis, preliminary categories were sometimes discarded and new ones sometimes emerged after checking and cross-checking categories with the data. Analyzing the data for patterns, themes and "linkages among various parts of the data" (Patton 1980) continued to arise as the findings for the data were reviewed and analyzed in their entirety.

Summary of the Data Analysis

The preliminary categories served as windows through which to view the data; however, categories that were inappropriate to students' actual responses were not utilized in seeking patterns and themes during the later stages of the content analysis. Only repeated themes and patterns in students' actual responses determined the final

categories for description and analysis of the data. The final categories of topics and subjects which emerged during the content analysis were the following:

- Attitudes towards Writing
  - Reflections on Feelings
  - Motivation to Learn
- Description of Self as Writer
  - Preliminary Descriptions
  - Indirect Descriptions at Mid-Term
  - Final Descriptions
- Self-Direction (Self-Evaluation and Planning)
  - Interviewing Language
    - Encouragement
    - Elicitation
  - Self-Evaluation and Planning
    - Inability to Evaluate Positively
    - Global Evaluation
    - Specific Evaluation
    - Global Planning
    - Specific Planning
    - Empowering Evaluation

The comprehensive results of the analysis of the data will be found in the next chapter, which will describe the findings of a thematic analysis of the student-participants' responses. First, basic information and characterizations of both the general and research ESL populations from City Community College of this study will be discussed in the next section, "ESL Population."

ESL Population

In this section, both the general ESL population of City Community College and the particular research population of this study will be described in relation to basic information and characterization. First, the general

population will be described and characterized in order to place the research population in the context of the entire college population and in the context of the entire ESL population generally enrolled in the ESL program. Then the particular research population will be described in more depth in order to indicate how the research population reflected the general characterization of the entire ESL population enrolled in City Community College. The description of the research population will also provide background information for the rest of the findings of this study and provide readers of this dissertation with information for comparison with past, present, or future ESL populations that concern them.

The ESL population will be described in the following two subsections:

Description of the General ESL Population
Description of the Research Population

Description of the General ESL Population

The general ESL population will be described and characterized under the following subheadings:

Basic Information
- General Statistics
- Placement into Level 3 ESL
- Placement into Basic or College Writing

Characterization
- Financial Situation
- General Insecurity and Lack of Self-Confidence
- Delay in Family Support for College
- Lack of Self-Support Techniques
- Time Conflict between College and Familial Responsibilities

Basic Information

Before characterizing the general ESL population enrolled in the ESL Program, the general student population of City Community College (CCC) will be described. CCC, which is a two-year college located in the northeastern United States, has about 3,500 students enrolled in the day school. One hundred fifty of these students were enrolled in the three levels of ESL offered at this school. Of this total 150 enrolled in the ESL Program, approximately 15 were foreign students and the rest were U.S citizens from Puerto Rico for whom English was their Second Language. The median age of the entire student body was 27 years old with the general ESL population being no exception to this median. The entire student body was composed of 55% females and 45% males, compared to 90% females and 10% males in the ESL Program.

General Statistics. According to the director of the ESL Program at City Community College, the following are general statistics about students enrolled in all three levels of ESL from recent years to the time of the study:

between the ages of 18 and 62,
a median age of 27,
90% female and 10% male,
90% Puerto Rican and 10% foreign students.

Their previous educational experiences ranged from completion of the sixth grade to completion of college in a foreign country; however, all had either graduated from high school or earned a graduate equivalency diploma (G.E.D.) in order to enroll in the program.

Placement into Level 3 ESL. Generally, ESL students scored below 30 on City Community College's English Placement Test customarily given to all entering students--both native and non-native speakers of English. However, ESL students who scored higher than 30 were sometimes placed in the ESL program because of considerations outside of the scope of this test, which primarily evaluated knowledge about the form of written language. (Students of the CCC general population who scored between 30 and 45 would be placed into Basic Writing, and students who scored over 45 would be given an additional writing test to determine their eligibility for College Writing.)

Also, in order to be placed in Level 3 of the ESL Program, they scored approximately 60 on the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency. However, students with lower scores might enter Level 3 if they had previously completed two semesters of Level 2. Students could not take any level more than two times, so those students might be

placed in Level 3 so they could continue their English studies. Others with lower scores than cited above were students whose oral interviews or writing samples indicated a higher level placement than suggested by their test scores only.

Students enrolled in ESL Level 3 could be categorized into two groups. One group had learned sufficient English before entering City Community College to score around 60 in the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency given to speakers for whom English is a Second Language and, therefore, were placed directly into Level 3 ESL courses. The other group had been sufficiently motivated to progress in the ESL Program from Level 1 to Level 3.

Placement into Basic or College Writing. In order to give an indication of the enrollment in required writing courses offered at City Community College and how the ESL student enrollment compared with the general population, the enrollment of both native and nonnative speakers of English in Basic Writing will be described. Of the total 3,500 students (both native and nonnative English speakers), usually 400 to 500 enrolled in Basic Writing before enrolling in College Writing, which was required for graduation credits.

After completion of ESL Writing Class, most students in the ESL program were "mainstreamed" into a Basic Writing course offered for the general student population of

City Community College before entering College Writing. Approximately 10% of the ESL population (in contrast to more than 85% of the general population) went directly into College Writing, but at least 90% of the ESL students (in contrast to slightly more than 10% of the general population) needed to complete Basic Writing before they had adequate writing proficiency in English to enroll in College Writing.

Often, students enrolled in Level 3 were highly motivated to learn. Generally speaking, there was a high attrition rate of students in the entire ESL program of fifty percent from entrance at Level 1 to completion of Level 3. Reasons for the attrition rate varied. Ironically, leaving the program sometimes meant personal success rather than failure.

Those who decided to leave college before completion of the ESL Program may have accomplished their personal goals even though they may not have accomplished the official goal of the ESL Program: completion of City Community College with an Associates Degree. Some students enrolled in the ESL Program in order to improve their communicative competence in English in order to find work. Since some of these who chose not to continue in ESL had learned sufficient English to find a job which paid minimum wage or better, their English studies had helped them attain their personal goals. Consequently, the fifty percent who

remained in the program through Level 3 thought college could affect a positive change in their lives, and, consequently, were highly motivated to learn English to continue their studies in college.

Characterization

Before characterizing the specific research population of this study, the general ESL student body will be described as characterized by the director of Bilingual Services at CCC. Since the director had interviewed every entering student since the inception of the ESL Program, she had extensive experience upon which to base a general description of the students enrolled in the ESL Program. The director of Bilingual Services reported that similarly to many adult learners enrolled in a community college, whether native or non-native speakers of English, financial and attitudinal factors presented predominant challenges for these students.

Personal attitudinal factors presented intangible challenges for the general ESL population. Even though students' initial attitudes involved a strong desire to learn English in order to affect positive change in their lives, an unrealistic assessment of the demands of academic pursuit often posed obstacles to the progress that their strong motivation suggested. Many students entered the program with unrealistic expectations and misconceptions

about school and just what it would take to realize their career goals due to their previous lack of academic success and preparation for college. For example, a number of them were previous school drop-outs, some from as early as the sixth grade. Even the high school graduates often spoke of previous difficulties with school. Since they did not have a realistic conception of college and the daily academic demands necessary to accomplish their long-range goals, many of them encountered extreme frustration their first semester or two.

Contributing factors that added to their frustration were the following: general insecurity and lack of self-confidence, lack of family support for college, lack of self-support techniques, and time conflicts between responsibilities for school and extended family and between responsibilities of parent and student roles.

Financial Situation. Financially, most could generally be characterized as from a lower income bracket with eighty five percent of the ESL students enrolled in the three levels of the program eligible for some form of financial aid, and about eighty percent receiving some sort of public financial assistance or employment training benefits. Therefore, for these adult learners, economic difficulties sometimes added to the challenges of college.

General Anxiety and Lack of Self-Confidence. According to the director of Bilingual Services, who had close contact

with each student from the time of entrance in the ESL Program to their completion or withdrawal, the ESL students were generally anxious or insecure about themselves and their abilities. She cited statements such as the following to exemplify their insecurities:

> I don't know if I can do it.
> I've never done it before.
> I only got out of seventh grade.
> I'm dumb in school.
> I never accomplished anything.

Also, their manner while being interviewed had also suggested this insecurity and lack of self-confidence; for example, they may have prefaced or ended their statements with giggles and excuses for why they probably could not succeed. On the other hand, these students felt sufficiently confident or sufficiently motivated to enroll in college in the first place. While they were insecure about their ability to succeed when they encountered the reality of the college experience, they had been courageous enough to enroll in hopes of a positive change in their lives.

Delay in Family Support for College. One factor contributing to their frustration with college could be characterized as an initial lack of family support for college. Since most of the students were women (90%) and were the first of the family to go to college, it took time for a student and her family to realize the importance of her role as a student.

As was stated before, a number of these ESL students had dropped out of school in junior or senior high. Previously, the family support for staying in school had not been there; the previous expectations had not been for females to become career women. The Bilingual Services director elaborated on this world view initially held by many of the students' families:

> It takes them a lot of time--not just one semester or two but longer than that--to really realize that they have potential. . .I feel that it was never imparted upon them when they were younger that college was important . . .because of what I said [see above]. Their parents were not. . .not supportive. . . a lot of them through lack of [higher] education themselves. . .It was never important.
>
> In fact, years and years ago when I first started working here, one of the things I found the hardest to deal with was [this lack of family support for college]. [One example was] an eighteen-year old in the bilingual secretary program whose father didn't want her to go to school. He just thought she was eighteen, she finished high school, and that was it. She should just go on and look for someone to marry and that was it.
>
> That girl later became a bilingual secretary. She's happily working and she married at 23 or 24--not when the father wanted her to, which was at 18.

Lack of Self-Support Techniques. Not only did these students generally not have family support for their new student roles, but another contributing factor to their frustration with college was their own lack of "self-support" in that they themselves did not possess techniques for bolstering their own self-confidence during the stresses

they encountered as new students. For others, previous negative experiences with school contributed to their lack of self-confidence, exacerbating their lack of "self-support."

Time Conflict between College and Familial Responsibilities. Since 90% of the ESL students were women who often were also parents, they experienced the conflicts prevalent among female parents enrolled in college. A contributing factor to their feelings of frustration was their feeling of division between their roles as students and mothers, with their previous experience supporting their mother role but not their new student role.

Another factor which contributed to students' difficulties in adjusting to college were requests from their extended-family for emotional support. For example, requests from the family in times of emotional or economic hardship to return to their native land resulted in either extended absences or withdrawal from the program.

Summary of the General ESL Population

The composition of the general ESL population included ninety percent who could be characterized as a "minority" population (Gardner and Lambert 1972) of U.S. citizens learning a Second Language and ten percent who were foreign students learning English as a foreign language in the U.S. The population was multicultural, with Puerto Ricans in

predominance. Most of the students experienced difficult financial situations, general anxiety and lack of confidence about their academic abilities, delay in family support for college, lack of self-support techniques, and a time conflict between familial and college responsibilities.

Many of the students in the general ESL population were women who had previous traditional expectations for themselves in familial roles which did not include student or career roles. Going to college, then, involved a dramatic change in self-image. The director was of the opinion that this change generally took more than one semester. Sometimes it took two or more semesters, and sometimes students would just decide that school was not for them.

The apparent contradiction between the high predominance of Puerto Rican females enrolled in the ESL program and the many frustrations and obstacles that beset them can perhaps be explained in part by contrasting descriptions between the high educational achievement of Puerto Rican women in Puerto Rico (Acosta-Belen 1979, 1986) and the difficult social and economic realities of life for Puerto Rican women in the United States (Acosta-Belen 1979, 1986). Since most of the general ESL population were Puerto Rican females living in the U.S., the following reports of strong educational motivation may explain why, in spite of many frustrating financial and attitudinal factors,

the majority of the general ESL population enrolled and persevered in the ESL program of City Community College:

> In the entire educational scene, the Puerto Rican female seems to have the advantage. (Christensen 1979, p. 55)

> . . .Many believe that the real influence of the female lies in her position as homemaker, mother, and teacher of the next generation.. . .the Puerto Rican woman is typically persevering, achieving, ambitious in many ways, and possessed of strong determination.. . .For the professional woman, at least, and probably for most working women in the island [of Puerto Rico], the possibilities for fulfillment at work often conflict with the cultural and personal expectations of a mother, wife, or daughter. Educational attainment is a desired and desirable goal, both for personal and for social satisfaction, yet it can conflict with both family roles and vocational aspirations and responsibilities. (Christensen 1979, p. 59)

> Women outnumber men in total enrollment [in higher education in Puerto Rico], which evidently reflects an existing high educational motivation among Puerto Rican women. It is thus understandable why some scholars have emphasized the educational advantage and overrepresentation of Puerto Rican women in institutionalized education. (Acosta-Belen & Sjostrom 1979, p. 68)

In an attempt at explanation of the apparent contradiction between almost overwhelming frustrations and obstacles besetting the majority of the general ESL population and their high enrollment, a gross simplification of the complexities presented might be that the economic realities of life in the U.S. stimulate initial enrollment in the ESL program and personal determination, deep appreciation for

education, and high educational and economic goals provide motivation to continue despite of all obstacles and frustrations.

Description of the Research Population

The specific research population (the ESL student-participants enrolled in ESL Writing Class) will be described and characterized according to thematic categories under the following subheadings:

- Basic Information
- Characterization
  - All Participants: Financial Situation
  - Female Parents: Familial Topics
  - Female Parents: Interests in Topics of Domesticity
  - Female Parents: Time Conflict Between College and Familial Responsibilities
  - Female Parents: Anxiety about Academic Difficulties
  - Characterization of Other Females
  - Characterization of Males
- Overview of the Characterization of the Research Population

Basic Information

Included in this ESL Writing Class were 17 students enrolled in Level 3 of the ESL Program at City Community College. Student-participants were composed of a random sampling in that they were 17 of the original 20 students randomly assigned to one of the two sections of ESL Writing offered in Level 3 of the ESL Program.

The majority of student-participants could be generally described as adults over 30 who were female parents from Puerto Rico. A few of the participants were females who were not parents, were males who were not parents, and/or were originally from Korea and Peru. The length of stay in the mainland U.S. ranged from one month to twenty-six years, with all but two living in the U.S. for three years or more. The statistics concerning the student sample enrolled in ESL Writing Class are as follows:

1. between the ages of 18 and 47 with most over 30
2. 82% female and 18% male (14 females and 3 males)
3. 20% foreign students (3 Korean and 1 Peruvian) and 80% Puerto Rican (13 Puerto Rican students)
4. residing in the mainland U.S. for an average of more than 9 years
5. an educational background ranging from completion of the fifth grade to completion of college in a foreign country
6. scores ranged between 26 and 49 on City Community College's English Placement Test
7. the eight entering students scored between 50 and 87 on the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency

For tables which present basic information, see Appendix D (Tables 1-6) for a comparison between the general ESL population with ESL Writing Class and for general statistics about the population enrolled in ESL Writing Class.

Of the 20 students originally enrolled in the ESL Writing Class of this study, three were recommended for Level 2 placement within the first two weeks of the semester, which left 17 students enrolled in Level 3 after the second week of the semester. Four withdrew after completing from eight to 12 weeks of the 16 week course and finished between two and four of the minimum of five papers required for ESL Writing Class. The attrition rate of this particular class was 24%.

Written data was collected from all 17 students enrolled in ESL Writing Class, and individual office conferences or interviews with each student enrolled in ESL Writing Class were audiotaped. However, only those 16 student-participants who gave written permission for inclusion in the study have been directly quoted or paraphrased throughout the text of this dissertation. Grouped according to students' first languages, the following pseudonyms were used in order to ensure anonymity of the participants, who were female unless noted otherwise below:

1. Spanish Language
   - Carita
   - Elba
   - Elena
   - Elizabeth
   - Francesca
   - Isabel
   - Juanita
   - Luz
   - Marisa
   - Rita

Roberto (male)
Rosa
Sonia

2. Korean Language
Bae
Komi (male)
Soku (male)

Characterization

While a previous section of "Research Design: ESL Population" included a characterization of the general ESL population, the financial situations and attitudes that challenged the majority of this particular research population were similar. Similarities were found in the following areas: financial situation, insecurity related to academic difficulties, familial concerns, and the time conflicts between college and familial responsibilities. By their own report, they were mostly from a lower-income bracket. Twelve of the fourteen female students were either single or married parents. All the women indicated emotional closeness with their families, and many times their academic and career goals were motivated by family as well as financial interests. Whether these women were parents or not, most of their previous role expectations were traditionally female, which often excluded career goals or advancement in school. Even though they had all chosen to become students, their more traditional domestic responsibilities often conflicted with the time needed for

study. Another obstacle to their academic success was insecurity about their academic potential due to previous negative experiences. Besides lack of confidence related to previous experiences, many were simply anxious about the present task of learning English. Generally speaking, these participants were adult learners who had enrolled in college in hope of affecting a positive change in their lives.

Since ESL Writing Class was composed of mostly females (82%) as was the general ESL population (90%), the characterization of the research population will include more responses from the female participants than the males. Since 12 of the 14 females were also parents, female parents will be more comprehensively characterized, while the other student-participants, other females and the three males who were not parents, will be more briefly characterized.

All Participants: Financial Situation. Most students' financial situation presented a challenge to them. For example, the majority of students received financial aid from the college, and at least six were engaged in an employment training program. Other students mentioned receiving other forms of public assistance. On the other hand, those adults who were not receiving financial assistance had to work either full or nearly full time to support themselves or their families, which meant that they too felt economic and emotional pressures inherent in combining employment with full time study. To assure

students' privacy, no pseudonyms will be cited with any quotations used in describing the participants' financial situation.

Although most of the participants wrote about their financial situations throughout the semester, only a few responses representative of the thoughts expressed will be cited. The following are responses in which individual students discussed their desire to improve their personal financial situation:

> 1. I'm tired staying home waiting for a welfare check and miss all the opportunities that gave me supporting myself.
>
> 2. I study English to I can find a job to work, and I can support my kids and myself.
>
> 3. . . .Now, I am studying at City Community College because I want to have a career so maybe in the near future I could find a good job and a better economy[economic] situation for me and for my kids.
>
> 4. . . .I'm tired of being on Social Security payments. I want to go back to the work force as soon as possible again. I can't do hard work like I used to anymore, but. . .[my career choice] isn't physical hard work.

The following two sample responses portray the everyday frustrations many participants faced due to financial difficulties:

> 1. I find me a [part-time] job, and I'm working to clean a office. . .This is a good job. I'm working to I can buy the kids the Christmas toy. Because has the welfare give me is not a lot to buy things for the kids, and my husband is not working now because he is sick. I have to pay [for] everything my house.

> 2. My mother she start talking to me about the winter. . .Problems. She said we have to save the electric bill. But I said to her, "Mother, deep winter, cannot save the heat because keeps warm the family. Better than we get sick." She say, "Well, I understand. That's why I'm worry[ing]," she say. [I said,] "Yes, Mother, I do too."

Female Participants: Familial Topics. Not surprisingly, the females in this research population clearly held children and family very dear to them. When assigned their third paper, which was a description of a person, ten females chose to write about a close family member. The other four females who completed that third formal paper wrote about close friends. Of the majority of females who chose to describe a family member, four described their mothers, four described a daughter or son, and one described a sister. In automatic and free writings throughout the semester, Rita, Elba, Elena, Marisa, Sonia, and others (both single parents and parents with a partner) spoke of their love for family, their pride in being part of a family, and their desire to spend as much time as possible with children and other family members.

Below are Rita's responses which were representative of the joy in family that had often been expressed by most of the females:

> . . .Happiness is a word that you can say when you are real happy. When something good happen[s] to you. For instance, when you have your mother visiting you from your hometown.

> . . .I have two children. . . .I am a single parent. [It] is like being a mother and father at the same time. I'm doing wonderful bringing up my children up with no father because they are good and respect everybody.

Elena also represents most of the female parents when she recounts the simple pleasure and deep pride in being a parent:

> . . . I'm an excellent mother. . .
>
> Love. . .Love is [an] intense affection and warm feeling for another person. That is the meaning who give the dictionary, but God is a real love, the love who everyone need. The love of God live in my home, baby, family, and me. When you love, you are for everyone who need[s you]. When my baby borned[was born] my home bright of happiness and lovely days because we love him [my baby].

Most of the student-participants in this study shared the feelings expressed in the following response which reflects the importance of sharing time with immediate and extended family:

> . . .I am a mother of two children and I love to share thing[s] with them and give them all my love.
>
> . . .This is about my mother. She is going to Puerto Rico for vacation. . .I am happy for her. . .But I am going to feel lonely because all the times on New Year's Eve I spend the time with her. But this year I'm going to miss her. I hope she have[has] a wonderful trip, but I [am] still going to miss her. She is planning to go there only for two weeks. [It] is the first time since we came to this country that we are not going to spend New Year's together. . .

Particularly expressive of familial devotion was Bae's spontaneous song for her mother, which she had written in an automatic writing during the first week of class:

> . . .Sing a song for my mother. . .
>
> My mother love like a red roses,
> Bright like sunshine,
> High like the sky,
> Big like a sea,
> Deep like a river,
> Big[ger]. . .
> Than [the] hold [whole] world.

The importance of family to these participants was evident in reasons they cited for enrolling in college. Concern for the family was paramount. Students wanted to learn more English in order to help their children with their school work. They wanted their families to be proud of them, and they wanted to provide a positive example for their children in order to encourage them to continue their education beyond high school.

Typical reasons expressed by the parents for enrolling in college were found in the following responses by Rita, Elba, and Sonia.

> Rita: . . .I will[would] like to go to college, because I like to learn more and get a good career in my life. . .I will be able to get a verer [better?] job. By going to college, I'll be giving my children some examples. . .
>
> . . .The education is something you need for a lot of reasons. For example, for you to educate your kids, you have to have some education your self.
>
> Elba: . . .My Two Wishes. . . First, I wish I had a food career to get a good job. And to get everything I desire. For example, to buy a new

car to go to work and to visit all the places that I've wanted to see. My second wish would be [to] finish school and learn English to help my kids with their work at school. Because sometimes they have problem with their work and they don't have someone who could help them. Finally these two wishes are very important to me.

Sonia: I want to come here and study because I want to improve myself and to know in the future I can do something for myself. I want my children to see if I can go back to school and become something of myself. [So] that they could go on and finish what they start so they would [not] have any "problema" in the future like us.

. . .I think that it is very important too, because of your children. If your children see that their parents have a good education, they would also try hard so that they could get one too. My career goal and dream has always been to work in something that I really like. I like to work with people. [This] is why I an [am] going to study for medical assistant.

. . . I also want my family to be proud of me. I want to let them know that is never too late to become someone if you really want too[to]. I know that [it] is going to be hard work, but I think it will be worth it. I am going to study hard, and put all my strength on becoming a medical assistant. I know that in two years I can't think about anything else, but when I finish, I will be so proud of my self and so will my family.

Another parent, Rosa, spoke of pride in being a mother and her desire for education to be the path to a better future for her family. The early disappointment of two miscarriages assured Rosa's deep appreciation of her two sons when she finally was able to have children. Like most parents, Rosa wanted a better future for her family. She believed that a job would bring her material success including, perhaps, her dream home. She spoke of her

concerns in these responses expressed in written work and interviews throughout the semester:

> [I] graduated into the eighth grade. When I was 13 years old, I have[had] my first boyfriend, and I married when I was 14 years old. Then we got an apartment. . . My first years were very difficult to me. When I was pregnant the first time, I lost my first baby. . . It was a baby girl. . .[A year later], I had a miscarriage for the second time. Is[it] was a twin a baby boys. . . .Then I got pregnancy[pregnant] again, and I prayed to God that this baby than[that] I was carrying. . .[would live]. . .[it] was a boy. Then I was pregnancy[pregnant] again. This was another boy. I was happy because God help[ed] me, and now I have two beautiful sons. And now my kids are bigs[big].
>
> . . .I go to work for a future for my children.
>
> . . .My dream is to be rich to buy me a house and a lot of things for me and my children. I wish[hope] I have a happy holiday with my family in this year. . .Teacher, I wish[hope] you have a happy holiday with your sons like I am going to have with my family.

In the following narrative composed of excerpts from responses throughout the entire semester, Isabel fully described her love and concern for her spouse, children, parents, and other relatives. Echoing the thoughts and feelings of many of her classmates, Isabel reflected on her love for family and her motivations for studying:

> . . .I miss my family [parents and other relatives] more than anything in the world because I use[d] to be so close to them.
>
> . . .I'm 24 years old and I'm married. I got two kids. . .They are the main reason to me to start my studies in the City Community College. Because

I want the best for them. With a career in my hands, I can get a good job, I can get the best for them.

My most important role in my life is to be the mother of two boys. They are the great treasure in my love. [It] is very emotional to see them grow, see their faces and I love to see them play and talking. When a woman became a mother, something change inside. You has something to really care [about]. When I think about my kids, I got a wish to be better for them. And for my husband too.

When I became his wife, he always give me a good support and fill my life with love and happiness. We are youngs, and we compart[share] together the life. We are happy seen[seeing] our kids grow and learn. Without him, I feel very along[alone]. But together always the world look different. I believe that when a girl became a wife and a mother is when she was a real woman.

. . .When I was a girl, I always dreamed to work in the medicine camp [field of medicine]. Now, I'm a woman and I have the opportunity to make my dream come true. For that reason, I'm planning to study to be a medical assistant. I chose this career because I love to take care of the people. . .Another reason is that [it] is good to know how to take care of a sick person because I will know how to manage any sickness that happens in my family. And the last and more important reason is that I will work to have my own things, to help my children and to help my husband with the support of the family. I know that to make my dream come true I need to work so hard, but I hope I can make it.

Female Parents: Interests in Topics of Domesticity.

When requested to choose a topic for their first formal paper from something they knew how to do, many female parents chose topics that reflected their knowledge about, previous experience with, and keen interest in domesticity. Individual students chose to write about activities that

involved nurturing their families such as child care and creating an orderly household. Topics included child care such as preparing a baby's formula and bathing a baby. Topics included housecleaning such as instructions for cleaning dishes, mopping the floor, cleaning one room in a house or apartment, and changing the bed sheets. To avoid a stereotyped view of these female parents, they did not all choose typically domestic topics: one woman chose to write about an activity which had recently challenged her, changing a flat tire.

One student felt perplexed over her topic choice because she was not certain if the domestic topic was important enough to write about. Even though her topic choice had already been approved by the instructor, she doubted her choice because one or two other students had suggested that she was "wrong" to choose to instruct a reader in cleaning a room. Incidentally, they too had written about topics which could be considered domestic, but they saw their choices as more "important" than hers. In the first interview, Rosa discussed her confusion and the resultant decision to erase what she had written, even though she had considered the topic was very "important:"

> . . .If I'm writing about the beds, how to clean the bedroom for me is this the important thing is to clean to mop, or the bed or sweep the floor. I put this. . .People say it's not that. They told me main idea is not that. . .it was the class. I did it wrong. [So I] erase it. . . You told me main idea and then I put how to be clean and [one

> student] said it's an important thing. It's not like that. For me, the important thing is to clean and do like that and they erase it. Oh, my God. I said I don't know. Erase it. I don't know. She [the instructor] said that, and then they say that. I erase it. I don't know.

Other students thought keeping a house orderly was important as did Rosa:

> Marisa: My hobbies are music, dancing, plants. I also enjoy cleaning the house.
>
> Sónia: I like to clean the house. I always clean the kitchen, the bathroom, the living room, and my room.
>
> Elba: . . .When I don't go to dance, I stay home so that to clean my apartment to look beautiful and smell good. Also, when I'm cleaning my apartment, I turn up the radio to heard[hear] music and in that way I feel more entertainment and I do my work more faster.

Other students' responses throughout the semester also reflected a joy in domesticity:

> Marisa. . .I'm also a housewife. I like to cook and I also like to prepare different thing[s] for dinner so all the family could enjoy.
>
> Isabel: I got a lot of hobbies. I used to take care of my hanging plants, and I like to hear good music. I love to decorate my apartment and I love to go shopping too.

Most of the females felt pleasure in their domestic activities; however, domestic concerns sometimes interfered with the new demands of college life.

Female Parents: Time Conflict between College and Familial Responsibilities. Many responses from the students in this predominantly female (90%) class reflected the stresses related to managing both the daily demands of

college life and their familial and domestic responsibilities. Both single parents and parents with partners found it difficult to divide time between their parental and student roles. While this was a common dilemma, the following seven students expressed this conflict repeatedly in their responses: Bae, Elba, Marisa, Sonia, Isabel, Rita, Rosa, and Elena.

One student, Bae, was not alone in her uncertainty about how to juggle the multiple demands of children, a job, and college:

> I'm doing thing[s].. . .house work and take care [of my] family. Also, work. It is [a] hard job. But learning [and] progressing (it) is wonderful.
>
> I'd like to get more. . .more learn writing. I need more. I like to. . .But I need more time.. . .I just really upset [with] myself. . .I understand, but really I need more times for effort. Then I [can] think better. I can understand better. . .I must cut down working. . .I need time because that's my problems. I'm going to cut down working and try get more study.
>
> . . .Yes, Yes, that's the whole thing is. I can get more smarter, really. Stay home. Is really time for me. . .I observe myself. I need more time. . .That is upsetting me. . .once in a while. Yes, that's upset[ting].

This was a frustrating conflict for Elba also. Going to the library to study may have been just another necessary activity for students who were not parents; however, for Elba it was a welcome but rare treat that meant "stealing" time for herself. She had hoped to spend more time studying at home, but her concentration was often broken by the noise

of her children. In addition, at home her time was divided between doing her homework and cleaning the house, preparing home-cooked meals for her husband, and attending to her children. The following responses clearly described her frustration:

> . . .I like to stay in my house, and for take rest, because I have a hard time in my school and when I come home I feel tire[d] and don't like it if I don't do all my things. .
>
> . . .More time [for school work]? Let me see. . .I try to do, you know, have to put [time] in my apartment. I try to do cooking and cleaning, you know. . .Ya, but my problem is my husband. It's easy for my children. . . .If I don't cook rice and beans, Oh my God, he start to talk a lot.
>
> . . .Yesterday when I got home, I did a lot of work on my house. First, I cleaned my apartment. Next, I watched[washed] all the clothes that was need for the week. Third, I cooked the dinner. I finished to do all thing about 7:00. So when I finished, I felt very tired. Then I start to do my homework. I think when I'm in the school, it is very hard for me, because I don't have a lot of time to do my things in my house.
>
> . . .Stay alone for me. That's mean[That means] I like [to] stay alone--not with my children, not with my husband, [they] 'cause make noise, you know? . . .I can't concentrate when they're doing something. I hear the noise. I don't like it. . . I never go [to the library] because I don't like [to] go to the library if my children stay in my house. I don't want them to stay alone. . .I like the library. . .I like it because when last week I study [there], I feel better. I [could] concentrate what I read. And sometime I read at home, I can't concentrate because my children start to ask for something and, oh, I forgot what I did.

Even when a parent's time was managed with a priority to academic pursuit, other responsibilities created

additional stresses. For example, Marisa had chosen a private school for her son so he would be in school while she was at college. Marisa explained in the following response how, ironically, this decision had placed additional demands on her time even though her sons' enrollment at a private school had been absolutely necessary so she herself could attend college:

> He's going to a Catholic school and they don't talk Spanish. And he doesn't know any English, so. . .That's why I get done all my homework and then I have to help him everyday. . .
>
> . . .No, [I don't want him to go to a public school] because if he goes to public school, I have to pick him up every morning. . .I have to pick him up at 12:00. . .And if I do that, I can't go to school.

In her written and verbal reflections throughout the semester, another student, Sonia, chronicled her concern over the conflicting demands of family and college life. Her first automatic writing, written in free-associative form, revealed her thoughts about college and home during the first week of class.

> . . .I am happy. I am sad. I want to go home. I am sad. I have to clean the house. I can[can't] think of anythink [anything]. . .food. . .laugh. . .song. . .music. . .homework. . .love. . .baby. . .grocery. . .classes. . .milk. . .bread. . .soup.

During another automatic writing later in the semester, Sonia reflected upon her busy daily schedule:

> . . .I [have] to do some shopping and also I have to do my homework, so it's going to be a long day. I am a little nerves [nervous] about the test. . .I hope I do well on it. I am going to try to

> study hard. I also take time to study. My children helps me a lot. They wouldn't bother me if they see that I am busy. They make me "cafe" [coffee] and bring me some or thing make me a snack. They are very helpful when they see me with my book. But when they have problem with their work, I am alway[s] there to help them. I think that every parent should help their children with their work or problems.

Towards the end of the semester, Sonia discussed another conflict familiar to parents in this research population. Whether to stay home with her daughter who was ill or attend class so she would not fall behind in her work was a difficult decision:

> . . .Today I would like to write about my daughter. I left her home. She is sick with the flu. I worry about her. I feel that I should be there with her instead of leaving her with a sister. She might think I don't care if she [is] sick. I explained to her that I couldn't miss more classes because I already miss three day[s]. . .if I miss more classes then I would be behind and I don't want to get behind any more. I think that she understand me.

In the following narration presented in chronological order from the beginning to the end of one semester, Isabel recounted similar challenges in managing both family and college life:

> I has a real busy day today. I'm not has time for anything. I wake up at 6:30, clean the house, take a bath, and wake up my boy. Then he go to his school and I came here (to the college). Now, I'm taking the classes. When I going out, I has to go to an appointment, shopping food and pay some bills. When I came backs to my apartment has to cook and has already my husband start work at 6:00 P.M. and he has to eat before leaving. Only in the night, I get a small time for me.

> . . .Every afternoon when I came home again after the college, sometimes a feel so tired. Be[ing] a mother, a student, and a student is so hard. [It] is when I get hard times, that I always remember my mother's words. She always said, "When you are single is the time to do everything you can in your life. Education, travels, work, . . .everything. Later [it] is so hard to do that."
>
> When I get back home, and I see everything in the house disorderly, sometimes I have to sit and cry. I love my kids and my husband a lot, but sometimes they want all my time for them. All my life I have ben dreaming to[of] a career. Every time I started my studies, I had to quit for pérsonal reasons. But now I promise to myself that this time, I don't going to quit.
>
> [Not only do] I do this for me, but for my family too.

By the end of the semester, Isabel commented on her success in managing both her parental and academic roles in a written reflection on what she had learned in ESL class:

> . . .As a housewife and mother, I learn[ed] how to manage my time giving time for all my things in my life. And my studies become[came] to be a real important part in my life.

Not all the parents were as successful as Isabel in managing the demands of family and college. Some parents found it continually frustrating. For example, Rosa worked very hard but felt it was nearly impossible to keep it all in balance, as the following responses indicated:

> I always like to keep my apartment clean, but having so much homeworks, I have no time to do it. Lately, I haven't have[had] time to cook a decent meal for my children.
>
> . . .When you have a family, [it] is hard to keep your house neat. Children can be messy. I do my homework every day. . .

> . . .Every time I get home, I try to do my homework. But if I'm by myself, I can't work that good. If the house is quiet. Every time, I'm alone and the house is real quiet, I can[n't] concentrate, so I have to wait until [my daughter] gets home. . .as long as I feel something or somebody with me, I feel comfortable.
>
> . . .you could do some now and some later, but I can't do it that way, because it doesn't work with me. Every time I start something and I go back, I have to start from the beginning, because I can't remember anything.

Of all the parents, Elena not only struggled most with the conflict between the responsibilities of family and college but also most successfully overcame all obstacles presented to her. Her dedication to her studies was obvious from the following narrative composed of excerpts of responses expressed throughout the semester. An understatement of her situation was that Elena found mothering an infant and being a student arduous at times. Throughout the semester, she poignantly communicated details of her daily frustrations in her struggle to overcome every obstacle to her success in ESL Writing Class:

> I don't know why I [am] behind in my homework. I think [it] may be because [there] was too much homework to do at home. I want to know, teacher, if you tell me what you do when when you arrive at your home? Do you have time for everything? Are[do] you care about your children? I don't know what[how] a person like you have[has] time for everything. Tell me your secret. . .
>
> . . .I would talk about when I arrive home everyday, I have problem. I have to make a meal (cook) and wash the dishes, clean the house, etc. Later, I have to give the meal to my baby. . .When I finish everything, I have to go and take some [other] classes at 7 to 8 P.M. every day.

> When I arrive, I want to study but every time I sit down I have problem. Nobody want to care [for] my baby. Every time I say "Please take my baby for few hours more because I want to study for my English class. . ."
>
> . . .I like to study, but I couldn't understand how can [I] care for my baby and how [I] can study. Anyway, and if [I] try to resolve some problem[s], but really I want to learn and come to school. I like to study a lot.
>
> . . .I don't want my baby home with chicken pox because I don't want missing school. I know if my baby is sick I will missing [school] but I say, "God, please don't let him be sick. . ."
>
> . . .For me, it is getting hard to study, but I do anyway. First, I do not have no one who care my baby. I always study with my baby need me. He likes to broke[tear] my paper. I ask the person who really force me to have the baby help, but they always tell me, "I can't." and "I'm sorry. Another day maybe." I get mad. Anyway, I say to God, Thank [you] for everything and I know you will help me, and still help me. I know I will success.

Perhaps due to her unflagging optimism, will to learn, and successful time management, Elena became skilled enough in writing in English to be recommended to Basic Writing the next semester although the time conflict between academic responsibilities and infant care had presented great obstacles to her success.

Female Parents: Anxiety about Academic Difficulties. Many participants lacked confidence in their ability to succeed academically. All the participants thought the present task of learning to write in English was difficult; however, many of them experienced greater anxiety about each

academic assignment due to their prior negative school experiences. On the other hand, for half of them not having completed high school meant not having experienced many tasks common to the college experience such as daily homework and the ability to follow written directions. Their limited previous academic experiences meant another obstacle to their present success, which increased their anxiety about the current demands of college. A number of students who had not finished high school reported that they had left school for various reasons. Some students reported that the transition from the school of their native lands to school in the Mainland U.S. was too disruptive and they became too anxious about school to continue. Like Elizabeth they quit school when they arrived in the Mainland U.S.:

> . . .I started the eleventh grade here, but I got nervous and quit.

For some, the move to the Mainland U.S. meant being put into earlier grades and, for others, it meant repeating a grade because of insufficient skills in English. Some left school because of family difficulties, early marriage, and the need to spend full time caring for their own children. Sonia continued her schooling as her family moved back and forth from Puerto Rico to the Mainland U.S. until the ninth grade when she began her own family:

> No, when I was twelve, I left Puerto Rico. And then I stayed there until the ninth grade. I used to live in New York City, and I studied there until the sixth grade. And then I went to Puerto

> Rico, and I finished in the ninth grade. . .I was fifteen. . . Then I came back here. I was married by then. I had my kids already. . .

Also, for many participants it had been years since they had attended school. Although the ten students who had not completed all twelve grades of school were very proud of their recent achievement of the G.E.D., their earlier experiences with school had evoked fear rather than pride, as the following reflections of Rita indicated:

> [I haven't been to school for] sixteen years]. . .[It takes time to get] into the habit.
>
> . . .Well, when I went to [junior high] school there [New York City], I didn't know English. It took me five years to learn my English. Because I knew English, but I was afraid to speak, it took me a long time to learn my English, you know. . .I stood [stayed] back twice in Puerto Rico, so that when I came to New York they thought I was too old to be in the day class. And they put me in the night class. At night time. . .I went one or two years first [to the school in the daytime].
>
> But when I went to the eighth grade, they told me I was too old. . .I was 16 or 17, something like that. So they put me up at night time. I had to quit, because the girls over there, they were real mean. . .They were chasing us--myself and my sister--they were walking up with me so I wouldn't go by myself. They were chasing us all the time, so I told my mother that I wasn't going to go back to school. And she told me that if I want to quit I had a choice--go or stay home. So I stayed home. So I was in the ninth grade when I quit school.
>
> . . .yes, I was very shy. 'Cause every time I said a word, they would all laugh at me, so I said if they're going to laugh at me, then I'll just keep quiet. I won't talk.

Not only the students who had earned a G.E.D. but others like Elena who had completed twelve years of schooling also

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> . . .Well, when I went to [junior high] school there [New York City], I didn't know English. It took me five years to learn my English. Because I knew English, but I was afraid to speak, it took me a long time to learn my English, you know. . .I stood [stayed] back twice in Puerto Rico, so that when I came to New York they thought I was too old to be in the day class. And they put me in the night class. At night time. . .I went one or two years first [to the school in the daytime].
>
> But when I went to the eighth grade, they told me I was too old. . .I was 16 or 17, something like that. So they put me up at night time. I had to quit, because the girls over there, they were real mean. . .They were chasing us--myself and my sister--they were walking up with me so I wouldn't go by myself. They were chasing us all the time, so I told my mother that I wasn't going to go back to school. And she told me that if I want to quit I had a choice--go or stay home. So I stayed home. So I was in the ninth grade when I quit school.
>
> . . .yes, I was very shy. 'Cause every time I said a word, they would all laugh at me, so I said if they're going to laugh at me, then I'll just keep quiet. I won't talk.

Not only the students who had earned a G.E.D. but others like Elena who had completed twelve years of schooling also

spoke of previous anxieties about school and studying combined with the taxing reality of outside work, family responsibilities, and time for studying:

> Then I came here [to this city] and I look for a job. I couldn't find any, you know, because of my poor English. And then I decide to go to the skill center. And I went over there. . .Do you believe it?. . .seven months. I went over there and I study English. Then I finish. They told me to find a job. Last year I was working. I was work. . .sorry. . .I was working [in a factory]. I was over there one year. And I get pregnant. I decide to let [leave] my job because everybody look at me like something's wrong. I decided to left my job and I been this month this semester out of school. And now I started again, both when[then] I was working in the morning and studying in the evening. . .

Repeatedly, Rosa voiced extreme anxiety about both present and past academic experiences. Rosa's narrative portrays the most extreme example of the obstacles presented by lack of confidence and high anxiety caused by both the limitations and negativity of past educational experiences. Rosa had completed the third grade in Puerto Rico, but when she came to the mainland United States, she was enrolled in an English-speaking first grade class. She continued her public school education until the eighth grade. Harsh treatment for not understanding her homework as early as the second grade in Rosa's native land was the beginning of a school career filled with anxiety:

> . . .I remember when the teacher use[d] to hit me in my hand, and I use[d] to like her. I was in the 2 grade in Puerto Rico and 3 grade. That I remember. She use[d] to give me some homework to

> get home. . . .My teacher used to hit me in the hand because I didn't do my homework because sometimes is[it] was hard to understand.

Rosa's earlier negative school experiences were evident in the following response which showed her concern about whether or not she knew as much as others in her past, present, and anticipated future classes:

> . . .In our class now, I don't know, in one way it's good because is more ladies than men. I get scared when there are a lot of men. When there are a lot of men and they're looking at you, you know, strange. And the girls they are all nice. They don't laugh at you like that. But some class[es]. . .You know the regular class, they say. . .The only Spanish is only her [a friend]. They [the student] are going to go up front. Oh, my God, I'd die. They going to be laughing. Oh, my God, she don't know nothing. . .something like that. I don't like it. I go, I say I'm sorry.

When the children knew more English, the parents in this research population sometimes depended on them for help with their homework. In some ways, this brought children and parents closer together; in some ways, it threatened the established authority of the parent. Rosa's previous difficulties with school made her feel insecure, but she had decided she wanted to learn, which meant asking her son for help at times. Unfortunately in this context, the exchange between parent and child was frustrating. This frustration, which threatened to thwart Rosa's present progress, was exhibited in the following conversation with her son:

> . . .Then when I do my homework, I be writing, it's hard. My son I ask him, "What's this?" He know a lot, but he can't help me a lot. I ask, "Do you know how to write this word. He say, "Oh,

> Mama, why you go back to school for? You don't know nothing." I say, "Well, it's good for learn, right?". . .And he get mad sometime because I be asking a lot. He say, "Don't ask no more. You have to learn." It's hard. School's hard.

By the end of the semester, Rosa managed to feel a bit more comfortable with her present academic experience:

> When I came to the college to learn English [I] was feeling bad, because didn't know anything about the class of English. After taking on English class as feeling good, because I know how to read English. I can write English a little bit. English and I know how to speak English.

In spite of the anxiety that previous difficulties with schooling provoked, most, like Isabel, were propelled to succeed. As Isabel's reflections showed, starting college meant hope for the future and the possibility of success in spite of anxiety due to past or present academic difficulties:

> Today is for me a special day. the reason is my return to the studies. All my life, I'm dreaming to be something that gave me satisfaction and may[makes] me feel proud of myself. But, for some mistakes I make a[I] can't do it. And now I got the second and great chance of my life.I decide to study something because I'm sure that I can do something better with my life. [It] may[makes] my[me] feel great and free. . . And the most important thing [is to make] an example to my two kids. Maybe later they follow my steps. I think they was the most important reason [for returning to school].
>
> . . .I'm so excited because for the second time in my life I'm going to start my studies looking for a career. I hope this time I can have it. The first time was in Puerto Rico about five years ago. I had to quit on that time, because I had a lot of problems and I can't put my mind on my

> studies. When I came to here I always dreamed with my studies. But I had to wait until my baby grew to start my studies again.
>
> When I started on the City Community College I'm very confused. Although I understand the English so well, it was so hard for me to learned. Maybe because after five years without learning something, my mind was a little closed.

Characterization of Other Females. Two of the females who were not parents, Juanita and Luz, could be characterized similarly to the females described previously in regard to familial interests, time conflicts between familial and academic responsibilities, and anxiety about academic difficulties.

The first student, Juanita, was a young woman who chose to stay in the Mainland United States while her parents returned to their native land. Juanita chose independence rather than return to Puerto Rico with her family:

> . . .I don't have family in this country. I have four years live with my on[own] self.
>
> . . .I come from Puerto Rico in 1982. I coming with my family then in 1984. My mother decide to go to Puerto Rico and I decide [to] stay with my friend. It very hard to, but I want to have responsibility.

Juanita's familial and academic responsibilities often conflicted. For example, after the death of her father, she felt it was her responsibility to return to Puerto Rico to be with her family for the following two weeks:

> I go to Puerto Rico about a week because my a father it dead. He got a [heart] attack. I have a lot of problem because I like to complete my course but I don't no[know] [if] I [can] complete

> [it] because I have to combat[go back] to Puerto Rico because my mother like to sell the house. I try to finish my course, [but] I can't think in the class.
>
> . . .Now I feel bad because my father died, but sometimes I can't think because I miss much. . .I like to give all late homework, but I don't know if I can't [can].. . .I have a lot of problem about my father died.

Clearly, Juanita needed to help in her family during this distressful time; however, returning to Puerto Rico for an extended period of time meant missing two full weeks of classes. In all, this and other family responsibilities entailed her absence from nine writing classes--a total of three weeks of writing class.

Another single female in the class, Luz, seemed less concerned with familial or domestic interests; however, she like others in the class had experienced previous frustrations with school. Luz did not complete the ESL Writing Course even though, initially, she freely expressed her love for writing and very strong desire to learn. Luz was unusual in that she was the only student who carried four or five other City Community College courses outside of the ESL Program. Because of her native-like English pronunciation and overall oral fluency, she was not immediately recognized as an ESL student until she received a score below 30 on the City College English Placement Exam.

After a recommendation from her advisor that she receive help in writing by enrolling in ESL Writing Class, she voluntarily enrolled.

Luz experienced continual anxiety about her academic experiences. About five years before entering City College, Luz had dropped out of junior high school. Then she returned for a while before dropping out again. She (like a few other participants) failed the G.E.D. test in English, but passed it after retaking it in Spanish. Her frustration with schooling coupled with the strong desire to learn were evident in the following remarks:

> I drop out from school in [the] 7th grade. Then when I turn 16, I decide to go back. Then I went to . . .study for my G.E.D. Then I went to [another center] to take the test and at first, I didn't pass it. Then I went again. I took it again and I pass[ed] it. . .I know with God's help [I] am going to make it. I hope. . .

During interviews and at tutoring sessions, Luz confided that she was doing unsatisfactory in all her non-ESL courses. Without explanation during the last third of the semester, Luz stopped attending ESL Writing Class. In personal correspondence months after the semester's end, Luz remarked that ESL Writing Class had been a positive experience for her and that she was presently employed. Her remarks suggested that her educational experience was personally meaningful even though she did not complete the academic program.

Characterization of Males. Only three of the participants were males, which meant comparatively less data to analyze thematically. Also not one of the three was a parent or married, which eliminated the possibility of comparing the males and the females in terms of the dynamics of the time conflict between college and familial responsibilities. However, the following themes were found in their reflections throughout the semester: financial concerns, familial interests, and anxiety about academic achievement.

The men were not parents, but they, of course, were part of other familial relationships. In contrast to the women, when asked to write a paper describing a person, not one chose a close family member; instead, their choices included a supervisor from work and close friends.

These men, however, did seem to consider family as important as the female participants. They loved their relatives and wanted to spend time with them, as Roberto's response indicated:

> I love my family very much. I love all my brothers and sisters, but I have special love for one of my brothers. . .My nieces and nephews love me very much. I love them all. . .

As the following reflection by Soku showed, they missed those who were still in their native lands:

> I have been brought up with my families. I never separated from my family before I left my country to study abroad. . .I have six brothers

> and two sisters. I desire to meet them as soon as possible. Sometimes, I feel aloneness because I have no friends here.

Even though the men held family as dear as the women did, they generally cited advancement in a career as the reason for entering college. In regard to a career, one student mentioned the desire to serve "others" and another mentioned the desire to be of service to his "country,' but none mentioned the potential benefit to their families as many of the women had.

Coincidently, perhaps, the topics for the first paper contrasted to the females' predominant interest in domestic activities. Like the women, the men did choose topics from activities very familiar to them, because, as Roberto explained, it was easiest to write about what one knew best:

> When I write about hobbies is easy for me to write. About fishing. . .because I grown up living at the beach. Fishing was a kind of part time [job] for us. Then I took up fishing as a hobby. I'm being fishing for a long time. I [had] been fishing at the sea and at lakes and rivers in different places. So is easy for me to write about it.

Though one male chose to instruct the reader in a domestic activity quite difficult to describe (how to use chopsticks), the other two wrote about activities outside the home such as crab fishing and preparing a car for painting.

None of the men reported previous negative experiences with school, but did report anxiety about the present task

of learning English. Even though one of the older participants, Roberto, had only completed the eighth grade before getting his G.E.D., he seemed ready for the challenge college offered after being out of school for thirty years:

> After more than 30 years of have left the school, I start to study again. I am going to continue my education until I reach my goal.

During interviews, Roberto reported positive feelings about his independent studies in all areas except writing in English. One of his favorite pastimes was reading, which was the basis of his self-education during the 30 years before he enrolled in City Community College. The other two male students were foreign students from Korea who had been very well prepared academically: Komi had graduated in good standing from high school and Soku had received a bachelor's degree from college.

Of all the participants, Soku was the most academically prepared. His studies had included reading and writing English at the college level in Korea. Soku's interest in learning went beyond getting "good grades":

> But grade is not important. The most important thing is how much do we enlarge our knowledge and can we speak English more proficiently.

Far from having a previously negative school experience, Soku probably had the most positive previous learning experience among the participants. Soku's remarks showed respect and admiration for his former teachers, who he considered as responsible as himself for his education:

> Many teachers taught me many subjects such as math, biology, language, art, music, and so on. But I think I can't achieve anything by myself. Of course, they can take care of me and lead me to good state, but all depends on me.
>
> . . .I really appreciate my professors because they have always been earnest and kind in spite of much difficulties. Sometimes, I get disappointed to myself, but I always try to be thankful for everything. The motto written at the classroom, "Leap over the wall of yourself" is very impressive to me.

Even though their responses did not indicate any previous negative experiences with school, these men were not totally confident about studying English. They experienced anxieties about learning English that were similar to the other participants. Perhaps Soku was the spokesperson for all--males and females--when he remarked on the challenge of actually using English to communicate daily throughout the semester:

> When the man find himself in a strange place, he feel extremely thrill [e]specially if he does not know how to speak the language of that place the extent of fear is very profound. . .I can't comprehend other's whole speech and can't express my feeling very well. So, sometimes, I feel fear and confus[confusion about] what I should do. When the strange person speaks to me even though I have intention to talk with him, I can't have conversation with him.
>
> I can write my feeling down on the paper in English, but [when] I have to speak to other person, my tongue don't move and my thinking ability is reduced.
>
> . . .At the beginning of the semester, I was very confused and very afraid of everything because I didn't have enough knowledge about English. Although I had been learning English for almost

> seven years, I didn't have any opportunity to use it or practice it, so I always forgot everything I learned. . .Although I had some ideas in my head, I couldn't express it. Probably it resulted from my lack of practice. Sometimes I don't understand myself why did I say that way after say something.

Overview of the Research Population

Even though a few students posed exceptions to the general characterization of the research population, the majority of the students in this particular research population braved many challenges that returning adults with sometimes limited and previously difficult school experiences often encounter. In a journal homework entry the twelfth week of of the semester, one of the female students, Elba, gave an in-depth description of the frustrations of adults returning to school. Her homework response gave a concise overall characterization of the students in this research population:

> This is about what I think of adult person. First, I think that on adult person it's hard for them to study in college. For example, those person[s] who quitted from school along time ago, they/we forgotten all the material from school. When those person start school again, it's hard for them, because they don't remember the material.
>
> Also, it's hard when the college has a discipline--hard because some colleges put in the class the student just graduate[d] with a student who finished school a long time ago. And sometimes the teachers don't understand that the student who haven't study need more time that the student who just graduated.

> Sometimes, the teacher rushes the student so the student feels frustrated because of the rush. And the first thing he has in the mind is that he's going to quit.
>
> That's why I have two children and always explain to them that when the person quits from school that it's going to be difficult for them. Also, I give them advises about not quitting of school, so it won't be that difficult because they've finished school and they can study what they want for their career.
>
> I also explained to them the reason I quitted from school. I told them that when was studying my family was very poor and my parents didn't have money to buy me everything I needed and the school were too far and I didn't have money to pay transportation. Also, a long time ago, we didn't have opportunity like now. . .

As Elba explained above in her general description of adults in college, these adult, community college ESL students had a strong desire to study English, but strained economic situations and previous academic difficulties posed almost insurmountable obstacles to their academic goals.

Part- and full-time jobs in order to survive placed time constraints on these students. Students who had only completed the eighth or ninth grade or who had been away from school for many years needed time and practice to develop the discipline, time management, and study skills necessary to college life. Others who had learned survival English on their own needed concentrated study and time to learn the grammar needed for writing in a standard register expected for college level writing.

Additionally, traditional female roles and other adult obligations sometimes conflicted with the time needed for study. Children getting ill or needing help with homework and time needed to keep an orderly home and cook complete meals meant continual juggling to make time for study. However, they displayed bravery by enrolling in college in the first place even though they often lacked the academic preparation which could have made this an easier task. They were highly motivated to change their lives in a positive way. They wanted a job or a better job and more money to create a more comfortable family life. They wanted to learn enough English to help their children with their school work, and they wanted to encourage their children to continue in higher education in the future by setting an example for them to follow. The dignified manner in which the majority of them overcame the many frustrations, hardships, and obstacles that confronted them indicated their conscientiousness as students and their sincere desire to make English their second language.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

Introduction

This section of the dissertation will report and discuss the findings under the following subheadings:

Attitude towards Writing
Description of Self as Writer (Writing Identity)
Self-Direction (Self-Evaluation and Planning)
Summary of the Findings

Throughout this chapter on findings, student-participants' reflections on attitude towards writing, descriptions of self as writer, and self-direction will be categorized by themes found in the data. This chapter will describe responses representative students made in their early automatic writings, questionnaire responses, and first interviews. When appropriate, these will be contrasted with their second interviews and automatic writings during the middle of the semester. When appropriate, these will then be compared with their written and oral comments made at the very end of the semester, except in the case of representative participants who did not attend the final interview or complete the final writing.

Student-participants were chosen as representative because their responses reflected the range and diversity of responses received from all the student-participants and reflected the heterogeneity of ability levels. The

following were considerations in categorizing a response as representative:

Representative of a particular theme
Ability to articulate reflections
Dramatic change throughout the semester
Relatively high, satisfactory, low, or limited English proficiency

The assessments of high, satisfactory, low, or limited proficiency were based on the final assessments and subsequent recommendations for enrollment in a writing class the next semester. Final recommendations for next semester's enrollment were based on the participants' final achievement in ESL Writing Class and the other ESL courses they had been enrolled in and/or on their ability to comprehend and produce oral English in a classroom situation. In respective order, proficiency assessments of high, satisfactory, low, or limited indicated the following placement recommendations: College Writing, Basic Writing, Repeat ESL Writing, or Repeat Level 3 (recommendation for students with difficulty comprehending and producing oral English in the classroom).

Attitude towards Writing

This section will report and discuss representative responses from student-participants about attitude toward writing given both orally and in writing during the beginning, middle, and end of one semester (See "Research Design: Data Collection" for a description of the data

collection procedures and Appendix A for the specific handouts given to student-participants).

In this section, the following eight students' responses were chosen as representative:

Soku (College Writing recommendation--High Proficiency)
Elena, Isabel and Sonia (Basic Writing recommendation--Satisfactory Proficiency)
Rita and Roberto (Repeat ESL Writing recommendation--Low Proficiency)
Bae and Juanita (Repeat Level 3 recommendation--Limited Proficiency)

The findings about attitude were separated into two general categories: feelings and motivation to learn. Student-participants' oral and written responses indicated attitudes concerning motivation and feelings.

For the purposes of categorizing and discussing the findings about attitude towards writing, a response which included words that indicated a general impression of motivation such as "interest" or "important" was categorized as a positive feeling; however, when a response included elaboration beyond a general impression, the response was categorized as motivation.

Feelings were further categorized as positive, negative, neutral, or a mixture of both positive and negative. Though emotions or feelings designated as positive, negative, or neutral and attitudes may in experiential reality sometimes coincide with attitudes designated as motivation, they were delineated as separate

thematic categories for the purposes of reporting and discussing the findings in this section. The following subsections will report and discuss the findings concerning attitude towards writing:

Reflections on Feelings
Motivation to Learn
Discussion of Attitude Towards Writing

Reflections on Feelings

A review of student-participants' oral and written responses given during the first two weeks of the semester indicated that their emotions were complex: often they reported both positive and negative feelings in the same oral or written response.

Responses that were designated indicative of a positive attitude included the following words:

love, fantastic, good, growing, easy, like, comfortable, important, interested

Responses designated negative included the following words:

angry, poor, fail, go blank, difficult, hard, confused, don't know, bored, tired, hungry

Responses designated neutral included comments such as the following:

need it, willing to learn, fairly comfortable, will try

Students' reflections on feelings will be discussed more fully in the following subsections:

Most Positive Feelings
Mixed Feelings
Most Negative Feelings
Most Marked Change in Feelings

Most Positive Feelings

Elena and Bae were the most consistently positive in attitude throughout the semester, while Isabel had mixed feelings at first but overall had very positive feelings also. Right from the beginning, Elena, considered satisfactory in English proficiency but very expressive of her attitudes towards writing, stated that she "loved" to write, but felt that she was a failure because "nobody can understand me." At midterm, Elena felt uncertain about her ability, but still liked writing and thought it was very important to her future:

> I feel very strange, because it no my language . . ., but I like it; I know I will need it to[for] my future. Now, I know I want to learn more about writing. I need to.

By the end of the semester, Elena continued to enjoy writing, but had grown in self-confidence:

> . . .I didn't believe that I could write in English. Now, I know that I can. . .No, I know I don't know too much English, but I try to correct as much as I can. . .

> My attitude is good. Now, I know a lot of writing then[than] before. I know I'm a good writer because I write [about] different subject; for instance, narrative, imagination, description, and other different subject[s].

In her written response about a change in writing attitude, she remarked that her attitude had changed and that she was pleasantly 'surprised' by her progress:

> The reason has changed my writing is because before I couldn't write. Now, I'm very surprised about it. I always try to write good enough that [so] a person can understand my writing.

When pointedly asked if she thought her writing had improved, Elena replied affirmatively including an indication of positive emotion in that reply:

> Yes, I'm glad.

During the third interview, Elena recalled that she had been asked to describe herself as a writer in the previous midterm interview. At that time, due to her difficulty with English pronunciation, she was misunderstood to say "fair" instead of "fail." Her incisive response to this question during the third interview clarified and described her change of attitude about herself as a writer:

> Now I. . .remember last time. . .you ask me how I think of myself as a writer. I told you I was fail and now I am good because now I know and now I'm glad to know. . .When you ask me that question, I tell you I feel like I'm fail, you know, [as] a writer because I don't know how to write. . .I was bad and now I know.

Later, during the third interview, when asked to restate her reflections concerning her description of herself as a

writer in order to clarify her meaning, Elena again responded very positively: "I'm happy."

One student whose proficiency in English was limited but who was also fully expressive of a remarkably positive attitude towards writing was Bae. At first, Bae felt writing was good for her development ("good because I'm growing"), felt hopeful about becoming a "good writer," "wanted" to learn, and felt very willing to learn. At midterm, Bae still felt practicing writing was beneficial to her:

> . . .[Writing] is good for me. I can learn world, and sentence writing skills more build up. I think is good for writing. I think I need more about writing. I want to build up, [so that] I can writing[write] fast [and] understand.

As interested and enthusiastic as Bae was, her limited proficiency in English frustrated and upset her. When questioned, she acknowledged she had improved dramatically throughout the semester but also realistically acknowledged her deficiencies. She sincerely desired to learn more and spend more time studying, but this desire to learn conflicted with the time she needed to devote to a nearly full-time work schedule in order to support her family. Some excerpts of her second interview revealed both her positive and negative feelings about writing and learning English in general:

> Yes, I need more work. . .I did [see a change]. Lot of things. Oh, everything is better. . .

> But I need more time. I have to put more time then I can get really deep. That's my problems, 'cause I'm working at night and things. I just [am] really upset [at] myself. . .
>
> . . .sometimes I think I can't understand. . .I can understand, but really I need more lot of times for effort. Then I think better. I can understand better. . .
>
> I need more time because that's my problems. I'm going to cut down working and try get more study. . .Yes, that's the [what the] whole thing is. I can get more smarter really. Stay home. [The problem] Is really time for me. . .I observe myself. I need more time.
>
> That is upsetting me. Once in a while. Yes, that's upset[ting].

Bae did not attend the third conference, but completed all her written assignments except the final essay exam. During each ESL Writing Workshop, Bae demonstrated her high interest in learning by her consistently attentive and enthusiastic classroom behavior. Her effort and interest were also demonstrated by her willingness to voluntarily attend more than ten one-hour tutoring sessions after class.

A third student-participant whose overall feelings were positive was Isabel, whose proficiency in English was satisfactory. Initially, Isabel had mixed feelings about writing, but began to enjoy it more as her skills and self-confidence increased. She enjoyed writing "when she communicated," but as for her feelings about writing, she remarked that sometimes she "want[ed] to and sometimes don't." By midterm, Isabel had begun to feel more confident

about her writing and her attitude about ESL Writing Class had become very positive:

> It's the class that I love. . .that I like the most.

Her written response at midterm confirmed this positive attitude:

> I like the writing class a lot. This class is the most I like. Writing is the best way to express your feelings and ideas. . .

By the end of the semester, Isabel still enjoyed writing, and this enjoyment had been strengthened by her increased self-confidence. Comparing her skills in composition from the start to the semester's end, Isabel explained that the change in attitude stemmed from the feeling that she had improved:

> My attitude towards writing is very optimist[ic], because I find in writing the way to express my ideas and feelings clearly to the reader.
>
> My attitude towards writing changed because now I'm able to improve any topic or idea that I have with all the writing skills I learned in the writing class. Throughout this semester, I learned a lot of new skills that make my attitude changed.

When this researcher questioned Isabel about how her attitude had changed by the time of the third interview and the end of the semester, she responded with changes she had made in her own writing process and how she had become very conscientious in her writing work:

> The process that I'm going to use. When I'm going to write about something, I spend more time

> thinking, the organization. . .I make a draft, then correct. I try to do my best.

When this researcher responded to her answer by suggesting that attitude had to do with feelings rather than the particular process she utilized when writing, Isabel unabashedly replied that there had indeed been a change in attitude, since she loved to write far more at the end of the semester than at the beginning: ". . .because I love more writing. . .I like it more."

Mixed Feelings

Juanita and Soku, two students with dramatically contrasting proficiencies in English could be categorized as having the most mixed feelings. Coupled with much anxiety about their performance were strong feelings of enjoyment in expressing themselves in writing. According to Brand and Powell (1985), feelings of anxiety (or fear or anger) are not directly related to competency since both skilled and unskilled writers may experience anxiety for different reasons:

> Skilled writers may experience anxiety or frustration because they have high expectations for themselves. Unskilled writers may feel anxiety or frustration because they are undertaking a task for which they have a strong sense of inadequacy. (p. 284)

Of all the participants, the only student to be recommended to enroll in College Writing the next semester because of his relatively high proficiency in English was Soku.

Perhaps, graduation from college in his native country, Korea, had given him practice and experience in literacy, which was transferred to English.

Paradoxical to his achievement, Soku often self-assessed his writing ability as low. However, Soku's familiarity with written English may have made him keenly aware of the discrepancy between his productive ability and his receptive knowledge of written English that he had experienced in his extensive reading of college-level English literature and textbooks. Also, his high goals or self-expectations and his present ability to produce written English to a level that would meet his self-imposed goals may have created feelings of inadequacy when faced with a writing assignment. Perhaps the contrast between his high cognitive ability for abstract concepts (based on his experience with college level thinking) and his comparatively limited ability to express the complexity of his thoughts contributed to his feelings of anxiety also.

Soku began his first interview with an apology for his "poor English" as did all the other student-participants. At this beginning stage, Soku reported that he found writing "difficult" and "confusing," but was "very interested" in learning. He felt he "needed more practice" in order to improve his proficiency in English.

In the middle of the semester, Soku felt confused and felt that writing was hard, but valuable and interesting:

> To write something in English is a little hard to me. I always spend much time to get idea and develop content, but this class is very interesting and important. I can study much valuable knowledge through this class. I have not enough vocabulary, so I always confusing [am confused].

At the end of the semester, Soku's written reflections about his attitude indicated his continued interest in increasing his knowledge of writing in order to better communicate with others in English. The change Soku reported was that previously he had considered writing useful only for course work, but now had expanded this opinion to include the feeling that writing provided him with personal intellectual stimulation:

> Before this semester, I thought the writing only as a means of report or homework. However, I realize that the writing gives me a lot of knowledge and keeps my head working.

Another student, Juanita, who like Bae had limited oral and written English proficiency, had very mixed feelings. Generally, she felt very positive about writing, but the difficulty of the task created negative feelings of anxiety, boredom, confusion, and exhaustion. Her positive feelings were remarkable considering Juanita's relatively low proficiency in all aspects of English except reading. Her high ability in reading gave her a receptive knowledge of written English that far exceeded her ability in written

production of English. With a receptive awareness similar in some ways to Soku's, this awareness coupled with frustration at her inability to produce to this standard may have contributed to her anxiety when confronted with a writing assignment.

The process approach to writing utilized in Writing Workshop had emphasized producing automatic writing at first, which allowed her to write words and phrases in free associative style. This writing technique permitted Juanita to experience joy in written expression. According to her responses in regard to attitude about writing, she had a strong desire to express herself in English. At the beginning of the semester, she remarked that she felt "fantastic" and "liked to write very much." Furthermore, writing was a very positive experience for her in comparison to the previous semester when she had first taken an ESL writing class with a more traditional approach to writing instruction. During that previous semester, she would write her assignments at home and pass them into the instructor for grading. Her papers would be returned from the instructor with grammatical corrections and grades indicating failure. During that semester, she felt very lost and confused at her inability to write compositions outside of class that would be acceptable to the instructor. The very positive feelings Juanita did experience during the semester of this study may have been due to the feelings of

relief that she could communicate her ideas in writing through the freedom automatic writing and other idea generation techniques had allowed her in the initial stages of the writing process in ESL Writing Class. However, the sheer difficulty of producing written English still elicited negative feelings ("bored, tired, and hungry") oftentimes during Writing Workshop. In an early written response to what she did when she began to write, Juanita also revealed negative feelings of anger. (See Appendix A, "Steps You Take When Writing [Week 3]" for this writing sample.)

Because she felt she had learned so much, at midterm, Juanita's enthusiasm about writing was still predominant. In her words, she felt "great" because she had learned:

> [How do] I feel [about writing]? Great! Because now I know how to do mapping, write a draft. I like to go. . .I like this class because I learn more about writing.

When questioned during the second interview about whether she thought there had been any change in her attitude she remarked there had been due to her satisfaction in knowing her progress in learning to write:

> [There was a] change because (I don't know how to say) . .I don't know introduction [and] mapping but now I know. I know how you do the introduction, and the outline, and the draft.

By the end of the semester, Juanita again discussed her negative emotions which sometimes "disabled" her such as frustration, boredom, and exhaustion:

> Sometime you feel you don't want to writing [write]. . .sometime boring. . . Sometime I feel tired.

Juanita explained the negative feelings she experienced during her attempt to complete written homework for one of her other Level 3 ESL courses. Besides making her feel tired, her effort brought on feelings of resignation about writing:

> Sometime when you give the listen journal [Listening Journal homework], you have to write five minutes. Sometimes I feel tired. I don't want to write, but I have to.

One negative feeling reported by Juanita was that she felt "unknown." After repeatedly questioning her to explain this further and resorting to translation by giving her a choice of Spanish words such as "ignorado," "incierto," and "estrano," she finally chose "estrano." Her choice of "estrano," which means "strange" could be interpreted as feeling strange because of her unfamiliarity with sufficient English vocabulary when she would attempt to write in English. On the other hand, this uncomfortable feeling could also have resulted from the lack of familiarity with writing as composition.

The positive response Juanita made about her attitude was, "I learn more." When asked to elaborate, Juanita again responded succinctly:

Because when I writing, I feel I learn more.

These statements in themselves may not appear to be that positive; however, the strongest evidence of her positive feelings were nonverbal. Unlike her oral responses to writing identity, self-evaluation, and planning which were spoken with in a very quiet reticent way, each time Juanita spoke of her feelings about writing, she would speak animatedly and smile broadly.

Most Negative Feelings

Rita, the student who felt the most negative about writing was surprisingly expressive of her feelings, especially when responding orally during the semi-structured interviews. Her relatively low proficiency with the standard form of English required for college work warranted recommendation that she repeat ESL Writing the next semester, even though her proficiency in composition was satisfactory. Unlike Bae and Juanita who would also repeat ESL Writing, Rita had full command of oral comprehension and production of English. The recommendation that she repeat the course was based on her needs in reading, grammar and, the form of standard written English.

At the beginning of the semester, Rita very frankly admitted her confusion about her assignments in English and as frankly stated her dislike of writing: "I don't like to write." Rita often expressed her disinterest in writing assignments. When explaining why it had taken so long for her to complete one paper about a description of a person, Rita reiterated her dislike of the entire process of writing and commented on her distaste for the topic also:

> I am too lazy to write in any language. [It] is like I can't think of what word I'm going to use. Every time I try to think on a sentence, my mind go blank. Sometimes I think that I don't know what to write. I don't like to write about other people.

For Rita, writing often was equated with feeling confused:

> . . .I really don't like to write. . .when I go to write I get confused.

In Rita's opinion, it was equally distasteful to write in either L1 or L2:

> . . .Well, I don't write to nobody. I haven't write to my mother yet. . .Well, she been gone [returned to Puerto Rico] for at least 5 years.

By midterm, however, Rita began to feel more hopeful regarding her academic success and had become more interested in learning to write:

> Well, I like it [writing].

Furthermore, she stated her belief that a positive feeling would enable her to "know" more, which was strikingly similar to Brand and Powell's analysis of the relationship

between emotion and writing success (See "Metacognitive Approach: Significant Influences"):

> I think it is interesting to know how to write English. I still don't know a few words, but I don't worry, because I know there are a few people who don't know how to write like me. For you to know something, you have to like it.

When asked to report if there had been any change in attitude from the beginning to the middle of the semester, she was certain there had been since before she had simply refused to write, and now she was not only willing to write but proud of her achievements in writing both inside and outside of class. In less than two months, she had changed from a feeling of inability to write a note to her child's teacher to a feeling of self-satisfaction in the ability to accomplish this literate task common to parents in the United States:

> I didn't like it [writing]. [Before] I told my son to do it and I signed it. It doesn't matter who do it, I sign it.
>
> Now, I make the note. Now, I'm sure I know how to write the words the right way. Before, I was afraid and now I'm sure.

When asked about whether this new writing ability had made any difference in her life, Rita discussed how practice in writing had meant greater fluency in speaking for her. Rita explained how much more proficient in English she had become

in situations common to her experience outside of the classroom:

> . . .A big difference in my life, ya. I found a big difference in my life because I can speak clear. I noticed myself. I can hear myself explaining. Because you know how you can talk to somebody and you can hear yourself explaining.
>
> Before I used to feel silly because I felt that I wasn't explaining very well. Now, I can hear myself explaining good. It feels good knowing that I can explain myself. And somebody can understand me better. When I was saying something before, I know that I wasn't explaining good because people would ask me to repeat it again. Then I know. I thought that I didn't speak English, but nobody asks me again so it was a great thing for my life anyway.

Rita's responses to the writing assignment in preparation for the final interview were evidence of her dislike of writing. All of the participants had been instructed to develop their ideas in each response. Instead of developing her ideas in all her written responses, Rita wrote a brief one-sentence response to all the topics on the writing assignment in preparation for the final interview. Clearly, her attitude was "disabling" when analyzed in terms of completing the last writing assignment successfully. Perhaps any positive emotions about writing waned at the end of the semester when she was certain that she would repeat ESL Writing Class the next semester. In written response to the question of her attitude toward writing, Rita simply answered, "I don't like to write."

During her final interview, however, she orally elaborated upon her negative feelings:

> I don't like to write. . .I don't know how to express myself in writing. If I have to express myself to a person, I [would] rather just say it. I don't like to write it down. . .Even if I have to make a phone call, I'd rather just go 'cause I don't know what the person is thinking [on] the other side [the other end of the phone], so I'd rather just go [over to them in person].

When she commented orally about her change in attitude, it seemed that her feelings that had been overwhelmingly negative in the beginning were now mixed with some positive feelings since she had begun to feel writing was important:

> Well, before this semester, I wasn't thinking about writing. I wasn't thinking about it. . .No, I didn't think writing in English was that important. I didn't think so. . .

> Now, I think that especially living here it's important that[when] you live here. . .Yes, it's important. Because if I live in Puerto Rico, I didn't have to learn how to write in English because everybody spoke Spanish.

As Rita acknowledged her improvement later in the third interview, more positive feelings surfaced. At that time, she recalled her previous fears and lack of self-confidence that had previously totally "disabled" her in writing. In her oral response, she clarified the negative emotions that had been "disabling" her:

> Before I was afraid. I didn't have confidence in myself. I was afraid. I didn't let my son take it [a note to the teacher] to school. Every time I started a letter, I ripp[ed] it up. Because I said [to myself] I'm not doing it right. . .now I do it and I give it to her. . .to him [her son].

Rita was categorized "most negative" in feelings for the purposes of reporting these findings; however, Rita's feelings were complex, including both positive and negative feelings. Even though Rita still did not "like" to write, she felt it was "important" to her success in learning English. By the end of the semester, she had some feeling of confidence in her progress which gave her incentive to write more, but her preference for oral communication remained constant throughout the semester.

Most Marked Change in Feelings

Both Sonia and Roberto had mixed feelings about writing at the beginning of the semester which changed to more positive feelings by the end of the semester. Their proficiency levels were different: Sonia's proficiency was satisfactory and Roberto's was relatively low.

Sonia experienced the most dramatic change in attitude. At first, Sonia displayed reticence about writing. She expressed a passive attitude, which she later acknowledged as "boredom," when she stated unenthusiastically that she "hoped" to learn and was "willing" to try:

> . . .I think I'm willing to learn [to write].
>
> . . .I'm going to try. . .I'll try.

Insecure about her ability, she thought she wasn't "very good" at it, felt she didn't know how to express herself, and remarked that ESL Writing was the "hardest class" for

her. When the instructor asked those who felt they were having a particularly difficult time with writing to meet after class to discuss their placement in Level 3, Sonia was the first to arrive. Compared to others in ESL Writing Class, her score on the Michigan Test of English Proficiency was quite high (87), but she questioned her writing ability. That test score may have reflected knowledge of grammar and not writing; however, her self-evaluation contrasted sharply with her written production, in comparison to her classmates in Level 3 as evaluated by this teacher-researcher early in the semester.

By midterm, Sonia's feelings were beginning to change. She had begun to feel more competent and felt positive about improving also:

> I feel I have improve[d] in write[writing]. At first, I though[t] that it was boring, but now I am starting to enjoy it better. I think that I can do better and learn more how to write.

During the third interview, when asked if there was anything at all she wanted to say before the more formal part of the semi-structured interview began, Sonia spontaneously spoke of her positive change in attitude toward writing:

> I think that since I started the writing class, I think that I have improved a lot in writing. I started to like writing. I didn't like it before, but now I enjoy it. I think that I improved a lot. I think that I have improved a lot. [her repetition] I used to write a little bit, but I could write a lot now.

Her written response to the question about her attitude and any change in attitude confirmed that spontaneous oral report:

> Since I started writing class, I really enjoy writing. At first, I thought I wasn't any good, but now I have seen the improvement.
>
> My attitude has changed, because now I can sit down and write without any problem. I don't think that it is hard to write any more.

Roberto experienced a marked change in attitude, also, from serious reservations about writing at the beginning of the semester to a very positive attitude at the end. Even though it was recommended he repeat ESL Writing the next semester, unlike Rita, Roberto's attitude was very positive at the end of the semester. However, in contrast to Rita, it should be noted that Roberto's reading and composition skills were high, but his need for more grammar study in English precluded his leaving the ESL program. Roberto, unlike Bae and Juanita who were also recommended to repeat ESL Writing, was as facile as Rita in both comprehension and production of oral English.

Initially, Roberto felt some reservations about writing because he felt it was hard to "concentrate," felt inadequate in writing skills ("I'm a lousy writer."), and felt a lack of interest ("too lazy", "don't like to check it, [I do] "just what I need to do and that's it"). In his

automatic writing the first week of the semester, Roberto commented on his negative feelings about writing:

> I am too lazy to write. I don't like to write too much. I can't concentrate in what to say about a subject too much. I don't find many words to write about some things. I am a lousy writer. I don't practice writing. I just write what I need to and that's it.

By midterm, Roberto felt more positive about writing because it had offered him practice using English, which he felt had aided him in becoming more proficient in both speaking and reading English:

> I like to write in English. When I write I learn more to read and speak the English. Because writing is a very good practice.

At the end of the semester, he unequivocally stated his enjoyment of writing:

> I like to write very much, more than talking or reading.

When asked about his change of attitude, Roberto then reported that his previous lack of interest was due to his self-assessment that he would fail. He reported the following change from lack of confidence to self-confidence in his ability to learn:

> At first, when I start to write, I really don't have too much interest because I was thinking I going to fail.
>
> . . .anyway I don't have the ability. . .I was thinking that because so many years I be[have been] out from the school and I was thinking that. . .my mind was, "I don't want to do worse than I do now, so after that I see that to study, I learn something ." So I get interested to do the same

> thing. I change the idea was hard for me to help [others through counselling]. I think I change. I think I can do that.

When he had time to develop his ideas and monitor his form through various drafts in a process approach practiced during Writing Workshop, writing became something possible to accomplish for Roberto. As his self-awareness of competency grew, Roberto's positive feelings grew also. In turn, his more positive feelings "enabled' or empowered Roberto to accomplish the process of writing more willingly:

> I change my attitude towards writing, because I never before put serious attention in the grammar, word level, punctuation and spelling. Now, I understand that I make a lot of mistakes in writing. I try to correct them.
>
> . . .before I write something in English, I saw [it] in my mind. Sometime, [if] I don't remember, I don't care too[either] if the spelling was the right way or not. I don't care about that and now [I do], so I check the dictionary and try to see if it is correct.

Motivation to Learn

After analyzing the responses of the student-participants in regard to attitude towards writing, an unanticipated finding was that, while reflecting upon feelings or emotions about writing, they often included their reasons or motivations for learning to write. Since the cognitive variable (reasons for learning) was interconnected with the affective (feelings about learning) in the response of the research participants, the findings

regarding motivation will be included within this section about attitude toward writing.

In order to provide a theoretical background for the findings which will be presented in this subsection, a discussion of the literature regarding motivation will be included in this section before presenting the findings on motivation. It has become standard practice in L2 literature to discuss motivational orientation using the terms "instrumental" and "integrative" (Gardner & Lambert 1959); however, for the purposes of this present study, the terms for two general subcategories of motivational orientation, as defined by Malcolm Knowles' descriptive model of adult learners in The Adult Learner: a Neglected Species: "internal" and "external" (1984).

In the above text, Knowles gave examples of "internal" and "external" pressures that motivated adult learners. An example of an external pressure was the desire to get a job; an example of an internal pressure was the desire for general self-improvement or nonmaterial improvement in the quality of life (1984, pp. 55-61).

In early motivational studies, "integrative" orientations such as wanting to associate with native speakers had been reported to correlate with higher achievement in L2 learning, and "instrumental" goals such as career goals had been seen as less effective indicators of future achievement in L2 learning (1959). These early

studies, however, had focused on secondary students learning a Second Language (Gardner and Lambert 1959) rather than adults learning L2 within the target culture. However, later studies with secondary students sometimes showed "instrumental" orientation to be the greater indicator of higher achievement, especially in a setting where minority students were learning the dominant L2 Language in a culture where learning L2 had obvious "utilitarian" value (Gardner and Lambert 1972):

> English has a very special status in the Phillipines. Not only is it the world language adopted by the Filipinos as the language of economic life, it has also become the major medium of instruction in this multiethnic nation, although rarely is it a home language.
>
> . . .This type of relationship, interestingly enough, has not turned up in our studies of American and Canadian students learning French. Apparently when there is a vital need to master a second language, the instrumental approach is very effective, perhaps more so than the integrative. (p. 130)

Given the varied results of later studies, the question of whether an instrumental or integrative orientation had more motivational force became more complex, with Gardner (1972) (based on his and Lambert's work) advising educators to encourage both orientations for best results:

> The message for teacher and directors of language programs is clear: in North American settings, students of <u>foreign</u> languages will profit more if they can be helped to develop an integrative outlook toward the group whose language is being studied. An instrumental approach has little significance for them, and little motive force, it seems. For members of

> ethnic minority groups in North America. . ., the story is different. Learning a second language with national and world wide recognition is for them of vital importance, and both instrumental and integrative approaches to the learning task must be developed.
>
> . . .In fact, striving for a comfortable place in two cultures seems to be the best motivational basis for becoming bilingual. (p. 130)

The majority of the research population of this present dissertation study were minority students who spoke L1 at home, and who were studying English in the context of mainland U.S. culture where English has both prestigious and utilitarian value; therefore, decisions about which orientation would have more motivational force would be complex. According to John Oller (1981), motives are not mutually exclusive and the relation between affect and learning is complex and variable:

> Possibly the most important conclusion to be drawn from this stage [of the research in the literature] was that the relation between affect and learning must be a dynamic and bidirectional one. In fact, it may well be that the relation is an unstable nonlinear function that varies greatly across individuals, contexts, and learning tasks. (p. 15)

Although this complexity has been reported, the L2 literature still reflects a tendency to continue to regard an "integrative" orientation superior to an "instrumental" one as a predictor to success in L2 learning.

In the literature on adult learning, career desires of adults ("external" or "instrumental" motivation) have been positively correlated with academic success. In this

present dissertation study which focused on adult L2 learners learning L2 in the context described above, Knowles' terms, "internal" and "external," were preferred since they avoided any pre-judgment of which orientation was superior by acknowledging the positive influence of each motivation of the adult learner, whether categorized as "integrative" or "instrumental."

Based on the self-reports of these participants in this study, particularly in the area of finances, an instrumental or external goal such as career advancement in the target country might have been as strong (or stronger) a motivation of academic achievement as an integrative desire such as "making friends" with native-speakers of the target language.

Regardless of their varied proficiency in writing, nearly all of the participants had a strong desire to learn; however, their particular motivations differed somewhat. In this section about attitude towards writing, the student-participants' responses chosen as representative reflected the range of responses presented in the data collected. Their responses will be presented and categorized as either external or internal in the following subsections:

External Orientation
Internal Orientation

External Orientation

External motivational orientations will be reported under the following subheadings:

Job or Career Advancement
Academic Success
Survival Skills
Communicative Interaction with Native Speakers

Job or Career Advancement. Nearly all the participants expressed the desire to advance in career goals as a significant motivation for learning to write.

Soku, the most proficient in English, was no exception. During the first week of class and during the first conference, Soku expressed his external desire of getting a job in computer science upon graduation:

> My country is less developed country than U.S.A. or Japan in computer science. So, my dream is to achieve Ph. D. degree in field of computer engineer and serve my country.

> In my country I studied in English books. . .My fiancee is here. I decide [to join her here]. . .I understand I need more practice to speak. . .I want to major in computer science. . .My English. . .I have to learn. I have no interest in English [while I was in Korea]. . .In my country, reading English is important. . .Translating is very important. . .[Now, I am] very interested [in writing].

Elena and Sonia, with satisfactory proficiency in English, also were strongly motivated by the external desire of job advancement. Elena like Soku had decided a worthwhile pursuit was the computer field:

> . . .I come to U.S.A for learn English and to work as a [stewardess] but my plan[s] have change[d] a little, because I like also

> computer. . .[Her stated career goal is] programmer computer. . .If I know [knew] writing very much in English, I would been working.

Sonia's plans were less specific; she knew that she wanted to be able to "find a good job":

> [I came back to school because]. . .I want to do something for myself. Not . . .sitting at home all the time doing nothing. I want to find a good job in the future, so I can leave welfare. So those are my plans. I want to work for the future.

When writing her application to enter the ESL program three months before the semester began, another participant, Rita, who had relatively low English proficiency, expressed her interest in learning so she would be able to "get a better job:"

> I will [would] like to go to college, because I [would] like to learn more and get a good career in my life. Now that I have my G.E.D. and the career that I'm planning to get, I will be able to get a better job.

During the first two weeks of the semester, Roberto, who like Rita was recommended to repeat ESL Writing Class, was motivated by the external desire to change his job from working in construction to counselling:

> I like [to] work. That is why I'm study[ing] now. Studying [will] help me to get a better job.
>
> . . .After more than thirty years of [since] leaving the school, I start to study again. I would like to learn English well because I [am] going to study counselling to work with people who need help--especially teenagers troubled with drugs.

Interestingly, the two students with the most limited ESL oral and writing proficiency, Bae and Juanita, were sufficiently motivated to complete the course even though by midterm they knew that they would probably repeat ESL Writing Class the next semester. Their responses in the first two weeks indicated that they were highly motivated to learn even though studying English had been extremely taxing for them.

For example, Bae, who had been in the U.S. for six years, was under considerable personal stress since her husband's death a few years before. Her plan was to remain in the U.S. with her two children and continue working as a nurse's aide to support them. She had enrolled in the ESL Program to improve her English to enable her to find work which would improve her financial situation. Like many adult learners, Bae was highly motivated by her external desire of finding a better job:

> I'd like to get more. . .more learn writing. I need more. I [would] like to [learn]. . .I can write in. . . some [day] when I work in future in office or place. . .

The second student with the most limited writing proficiency was Juanita, whose first language was Spanish. Though her responses were notably brief at times, Juanita was still able to clearly communicate her desire to learn. Juanita had been in the mainland United States for 4 years and had managed to graduated from a U.S. high school two

years before, despite her limited ability to speak and write English. When asked during the first week of the semester if she had any questions about ESL Writing Class, Juanita did not ask any questions but responded with a simple expression of her desire to learn: "I need more help about writing."

Her motivation was evident from her stamina in finishing the writing class in spite of many obstacles. Evidence of Juanita's desire to learn was her attendance at least ten individual tutoring sessions with her ESL writing instructor to make up writing work she had missed, despite nearly three weeks absences early in the semester due to the death of a parent and her return to Puerto Rico to be with her family.

With her limited writing skills and limited ability to comprehend and produce spoken English, one might assess her stated career goal in medicine as unrealistic. This researcher's conference with her former ESL instructor revealed the former instructor's belief that Juanita's goals were entirely unrealistic, given her limited knowledge of English. The third interview of ESL Writing Class, however, revealed that her career goals were "realistic" in that they were based upon her personal interest in serving others and her previous experience working in a hospital in Puerto

Rico. In her own words, Juanita had external reasons motivated:

> I [want to or plan to] learn more English. My dream it [is to be] a good doctor for my future.

Academic Success. For most participants, motivation to get a job or advance in a career meant an initial goal of doing well in college.

Since Soku had been refused admittance to the university of his first choice because of his inadequate English proficiency, his primary motivation was external--to do well in his English courses including ESL Writing Class. Soku said that before coming to the U.S., he had not been interested in learning English, but that he had been interested enough to learn how to translate the textbooks necessary to earn him his bachelor's degree in business administration in Korea. Soku moved to the United States a month before ESL Writing Class began with the intention of earning a second degree in computer science. By then, his interest had been aroused. His keen interest in academic success was chronicled in his automatic writings and journal homework during his very first week in ESL Writing Class:

> . . .I am foreign student from Korea a month ago. I have little knowledge about English. So I have many trouble to live or act. For example, my destination was [a university in] Oklahoma but I want to stay here and attend this school. If I had enough English, I had could solve this problem. I am very interested in math and I think

> I have sufficient math ability. From my elementary school to my college, my math record is always "A" grade, but I didn't make a good record for English.
>
> It [writing] is very interesting. I have known lots of knowledge of grammar and how to write. So I am very interested in studying at [in] this class. I think that I need more practice. . .I am going to enter [the] university so I need so much writing practice.
>
> . . .To study writing will help me to make a report, theme, and good college life. . .I foreign student, need chance to make a report and to write a composition. . .I want that I have a lot of opportunity to write a[n] English composition and to read many valuable books. . .I want to believe that I can express my feeling and opinion before this class's ending.

Other student-participants were motivated to do well in college also. They expressed interest in studying more, writing more easily, and providing a model for their children as these responses from Elena, Bae and Rita showed:

> Elena: . . .I want to know very [more] grammar for writing better, but right now I [would] like to study more.
>
> Bae: . . .I like to tell the person. . .I can write to [the] teacher. I want to be easily could [able] to write.
>
> Rita: By going to college, I'll be giving my children some examples.

Survival Skills. For some students, reasons for learning to write were related to more long-range paramount goals were improved survival skills or getting along better in the U.S. in their daily life outside of class. One student-participant, Soku, felt frustrated with his

inability to speak to someone outside of the classroom situation:

> I always wonder about when I can understand how to speak. . .Somebody talk to me I can comprehend, but very confused about it. So I have many problems. . .[Writing will be] more practice

Another student, Sonia, also thought learning more English would help her to operate with greater ease in the target culture (the U.S.):

> I feel that English writing is important if were [we're] living in the U.S. because everything is in English. I would like to learn to write better in English, because I feel that I really need to learn more.

Rita's desire to learn English was the reason she enrolled in the ESL program even though Rita disliked writing. She felt that by learning English, she would be able to achieve independence as she expanded her world beyond her apartment:

> As you know, by going to college, I'll be able to get out of my apartment and learn a lot of thing[s] in life. By doing this, I'll be able to go different places by myself--knowing more than I knew before.

Communicative Interaction with Native-Speakers. Soku was representative of participants who wanted to increase their communicative interaction with native-speakers of English. He desired to communicate both orally and in writing with native-speakers both for professional reasons such as increased academic and career success and for the

personal satisfaction of developing relationships with others:

> . . .My personality is in-coming [introverted] and a little shy. . .Sometimes I feel aloneness [lonely] because I have no friends here. I desire to make friends to develop my English and my study. Gradually, I feel intimacy with here [U.S.].

Internal Orientation

Internal motivational orientations will be reported under the following subheadings:

Expression of Feelings
Joy in Self-Expression
General Self-Improvement
Expansion of Thinking Ability or Cognition

Expression of Feelings. Participants expressed their internal orientation when they reported a desire to express their feelings to others. This was seen by some as a significant reason for wanting to learn to write. The external orientation of communicative interaction with native-speakers reported above and the internal orientation of expression of feelings may appear similar; however, the above desire to interact with native-speakers differs from the present orientation in focus. The focus here is self-expression and the focus above is on interaction with others.

Both Isabel and Bae were representative of those who saw self-expression as an important reason for learning to write. Isabel saw writing as the best way to communicate

fully with another person. Isabel's opinion was that writing was the best way to express one's feeling, which was her reason for wanting to write well:

> Writing is the best way to express your feelings and ideas--[e]specially the ideas that sometimes we are afraid to express with talking. I want to improve my writing skills and, in that class, I can do that. I always do the writing to express my feelings.
>
> Writing is the most clear way that you can express your feelings. You can learn in your own writing and let know the others [let others know] who you really are. [It] Is a great way to know and let the others know things. You can learn with it, you can communicate something to the other person and enjoy yourself.
>
> . . .I love writing. I can express something I can't say.

Bae's desire to learn to write stemmed from her desire to express her feelings to others. When she spoke of feelings, she remarked that expressing her opinions publicly was part of her orientation of self-expression of feelings to others; however, communicating her feelings to others was primary:

> . . .I know how I feel, but you know [I] can't [express that]. What I thought, I can't write easily. That's why I want to get writing 'knowlogy.'

Not only did she want to complain when she saw something that she felt could be improved but she wanted to express her appreciation for services well done:

> . . .some [day] when I work in future in office or place. . .and something's wrong, I can complain. I can write to them easily.

> . . .So I would like to write appreciation to the public. Or I'm living in this city. I would like to say something to the city in area. I would like to publish. . .publish writing [in the newspaper]. I can write to [about] whatever [is] inside [me].

Joy in Self-Expression. A strong internal orientation was the anticipated experience of the sheer joy in self-expression. Isabel often used words like "enjoy" and "love," which expressed the sheer joy that she felt writing as self-expression offered:

> [Writing] is a great way to know and let the others know things. You can learn with it, you can communicate something to the other person and enjoy yourself.
>
> . . .I love writing. I can express something I can't say.

Because Isabel repeatedly coupled her reasons for learning to write with statements of personal enjoyment in an activity that allowed her to express herself fully, her internal orientation of personal joy differentiated this orientation from the desire to express feelings represented by herself and Bae previously categorized under "Expression of Feelings" above. Isabel's joyful experience of self-expression may have propelled her to practice writing to repeat this positive experience for herself. At the same time, as she learned to articulate her ideas and feelings more clearly and fully in writing, her joyful feelings grew.

General Self-Improvement. Some students expressed the belief that learning more English would contribute to their

general self-improvement. When asked her career goal or dream on the Basic Information Questionnaire given the first week of the semester, Rita's response was brief: "To learn more." Two weeks later, Rita had begun to feel more comfortable about writing while writing for journal homework. She spontaneously used this writing assignment to reflect upon her reasons for studying. In this response, she expressed her desire to learn and attributed her negative feelings about writing to a fear of "making a mistake:"

> I am going to college so I can learn something.
>
> . . .I think I am doing better than before, because I [have] been writing more English. . .I was afraid to write the English words, because I thought I was going to make a lot of mistakes and people were going to laugh at me. Now, I know that you should try everything--don't [no] matter what. If you don't tried [try], you don't know how much you can know.

Another participant, Bae, expressed her internal desire for general self-improvement. Even though her use of syntax was not standard and her expression was thwarted by her limited vocabulary, Bae clearly communicated her strong motivation to learn to write, which signified personal growth to her:

> . . .Writing [is] good for me because make me grow a lots. Give a idea. Reading [and] writing all success skill for me. I think about I can writing sometime. . .more high level. I want to be writer like a good writer [I] hope.

Expansion of Thinking Ability or Cognition. Another internal motivation was the desire to expand one's thinking ability or cognition in L2. The student most aware of this orientation was Soku, who believed that writing could help him think more clearly and understand more completely. This desire for improved cognition in L2 as well as his more external orientations of academic and career advancement and communication with native-speakers motivated him to persist in learning to write:

> . . .Oh, I want to practice. I want to think in English.
>
> In addition, writing can expand thinking ability and comprehensive ability.

Discussion of Attitude towards Writing

Observations about final achievement in relation to attitude seemed inappropriate even though, by necessity, there was a final assessment of low, satisfactory, or high proficiency in English in ESL Writing Class. Each student had varied tremendously in initial and final linguistic ability and composition as indicated by the variation in the entrance test scores and initial writing samples. (See Appendix A for examples of the heterogeneity of written proficiency, "Sample Student Entries.") Since the participants were so heterogeneous in initial and final ability in English, the most important criterion of success was each individual's progress and self-evaluation.

More appropriate may be observations about how feelings may have affected students' ability to participate fully in ESL Writing Class. Differences existed between the emotions studied in this research and in the research of Brand and Powell (1986). This exploratory study researched ESL students' reflections of their emotions or feelings about writing in L2 in contrast to Brand and Powell's systematic study of L1 college writers' reflections about their emotions during the writing process. Even though subtle differences exist, some of Brand and Powell's ideas may apply to the findings of this exploratory study. In their research, Brand and Powell categorized certain emotions "negatively passive." A "negatively passive" emotion such as "boredom" might "disable" student writers. Certain emotions generally perceived as negative such as "anxiety and "anger" were found to sometimes "enable" or stimulate students' writing performance. The positive emotion of liking to write expressed by a word such as "enjoyment" was found to "enable" or "energize" (1986, p. 280).

According to the reasoning of L1 researchers, Brand and Powell, the more positively students felt about themselves as writers, the more they would be capable of achieving. They would then be more likely "enabled" or "more readily engaged" in the writing process and less likely to experience emotions that could "disable" them in their writing processes (Brand and Powell 1986, pp. 280-283).

When looked at in light of Brand and Powell's ideas, a tentative analysis of the responses related to feelings can be made. In this study, it was found, regardless of writing proficiency, students were energized by their positive emotions and enjoyment of writing. The two student-participants with the most limited proficiency, Juanita and Bae, best exemplify this. In spite of their limited proficiency, personal difficulties, daily frustration with L2, and knowledge by midterm that they would repeat ESL Writing Class the next semester, evidence of their persistence was their completion of every paper after revising numerous times and attendance at numerous tutoring sessions with the instructor. Other more proficient students, Elena and Isabel, seemed energized by their pleasure in expressing themselves. Even though Elena and Isabel felt anxiety about writing due to their initial insecurity about their writing ability, they seemed motivated to work harder once they had experienced success with the steps of the writing process. They then began to feel less anxiety and more self-confidence in their writing ability. In turn, their pleasure in written expression grew.

Soku's anxiety presented itself through his low self-assessment in writing ability, even though this self-assessment did not seem appropriate since his writing was considered superior in the opinions of this researcher and

his peers in ESL Writing Class. In fact, he was the only student in ESL Writing Class to be recommended to College Writing the next semester. Perhaps his low self-assessment is not paradoxical, considering his cultural background (which may have influenced his extreme humility in this regard) and considering his extensive academic background (which may have increased his awareness of his potential level of written production). It is possible that his emotions were idiosyncratic in that he may have just been an extremely shy and unassuming person aside from his cultural background or high academic expectations.

Even though Soku lacked self-confidence in writing, his positive attitude that writing was important and that it was valuable intellectual stimulation may have created the positive feelings that energized him. He was consistently diligent even though he considered himself severely limited in ability.

Juanita's frustration and anxiety with finding the words in English with which to express herself made her feel "tired," "bored," and "angry." Writing was so hard for her at times that she could only think about what else she might do instead of write. Physically as well as emotionally, she felt uncomfortable, which was manifested in feelings of hunger when trying to write during workshop. She had a strong desire to express herself though; fortunately, automatic writing made this possible for her. Success in

expression gave her a "fantastic" feeling. She loved writing when she felt she could accomplish it. Even though her ability in English was limited in oral and written expression, she remained diligent throughout the semester. Perhaps, the positive feeling she experienced with each small success during the step-by-step approach to writing enabled her to continue despite extreme frustration during the process.

At times, Rita's resistance to writing as a means of communication and fear about her ability to produce written English created a major writing block for her. This writing block was illustrated through her slow speed of production during Writing Workshop. Completion of each assignment was delayed by her avoidance of writing, seemingly due to her intense dislike of that activity. There were times when she could expand on her chosen topic only after an oral discussion about the topic, either within the workshop or at a tutoring session. Perhaps, it was Rita's discouragement at having to repeat ESL Writing Class which resulted in her terse written replies in her final assignment, but she had made it clear throughout the semester that she did not enjoy written expression. In spite of her frank and oft-repeated dislike of writing, her self-awareness of improvement throughout the semester may have created sufficient positive feelings about writing to to enable her to finish every assignment of the course.

Both Sonia and Roberto began with feelings that could be described as lack of interest in writing. However, with a growing awareness of competency, their positive feelings increased. A strictly defined linear causal relationship does not necessarily link feelings of competency with positive feelings about writing (Brand & Powell 1986); rather, the relationship may be dynamic, recursive, and complex.

No matter what other feelings participants had, whether enabling or disabling, all expressed strong internal and external orientations as reasons for learning. Perhaps their strong desires for financial advancement temporarily dispelled any initial lack of confidence they felt when they decided to enroll in the ESL Program to begin a college career. Once enrolled and dealing with the daily frustrations of formally learning L2, their external as well as internal motivations seemed to bolster them when their self-confidence wavered.

Whenever they felt fearful or inadequate, external and internal pressures kept them persevering. As adults who experienced financial difficulties, they had adult needs for better financial situations. This often meant a step-by-step approach to this economic advancement. The first step meant academic achievement. For some who had experienced difficulty in daily survival skills, a step even more preliminary was an improvement in their production of

English. In order that others accomplish daily activities such as communicating with children's teachers and other community members, they knew their first step was to better understand the oral and written English they encountered daily.

Since nearly all the students expected to remain in the U.S., interacting with native speakers was essential to their full participation in the target culture, the mainland United States of America. They had deep feelings to express to others and wanted to better express these inner feelings. Self-expression through improved articulation of thoughts and feelings was an internal orientation as well as a source of joy for others. A desire for this joyful experience may have motivated others to practice writing more and to want to improve. For some, there was the desire for the simple satisfaction in knowing they had improved themselves by becoming more knowledgeable. Improving writing was equated with improvement in the ability to think.

A review of the reflections on attitudes towards writing of these community college, adult ESL learners indicated that they had a variety of feelings and motivational orientations. In the area of motivation, students had a very positive attitude toward learning to write. They expressed their orientations in terms of feelings and thoughts; that is, the "affective" and

"cognitive variables" that motivated them (G. Brown 1975, Knowles 1975). Which orientations were paramount may have differed for every participant, since responses to the question of attitude spontaneously prompted responses that reflected a wide range, and sometimes a multiplicity, of orientations for each participant--from academic and financial achievement to the joy of self-expression.

The most marked characteristic about student-participants' expression of feelings might be the variation of their responses; however, generally students tended to enjoy writing for ESL Writing Class (positive), had feelings of insecurity about their writing ability (negative), and occasionally just felt a certain resignation in accomplishing a writing task (neutral). Whether positive emotions energized and negative passive emotions such as boredom disabled cannot be proved; however, student-participants' responses brought their emotions to the surface for the continual reflection of both themselves and this researcher. In addition, as these attitudes "surfaced for examination" (Wenden 1986a) and discussion, the opportunities for positive change in attitude may have increased (Knowles 1970, 1973).

Description of Self as Writer (Writing Identity)

This section will report the findings related to student-participant's descriptions of themselves as writers

(self-concept as writer or writing identity). Data was collected from responses throughout the semester to a question which asked for self-descriptions of the students as writers. In addition, reflections about writing identity were revealed most comprehensively in their responses to all three metacognitive topics of this study, to attitudes towards writing and self-direction as well as to the present topic, descriptions of themselves as writers.

From the beginning to the end of the study, respectively, the present topic was presented in ways that ranged from open-ended to focused. During the first week of the study, the topic was present in an open-ended way. Student-participants were asked to choose any word or words which they thought described them as writers. Since most of the participants had virtually no experience in writing as composition and felt inadequate in communicating in L2 at the beginning of the semester, this open-ended method yielded limited data. As the semester progressed, more focused questions were then used to provide a framework which might yield more data. For example, during the fifteenth week, another more focused method used was an in-class, group, oral brainstorming on "some things it takes to be a good writer."

In an attempt to overcome the reticence these linguistically insecure participants experienced when thinking of themselves as writers, attention was diverted

away from the individual learner by presenting this topic in an indirect manner. One indirect method used during the seventh week of the study was to have participants write descriptions of an imaginary excellent writer and elaborate on qualities they felt such a writer would possess.

As stated previously, during the fifteenth week, the entire class generated a list of qualities that an excellent writer possessed. On the basis of that group experience and after reviewing each paper written for ESL Writing Class for the preinterview assignment at the end of the semester, each student selected and wrote about one quality he/she possessed from that list of qualities. Participants later responded orally to the topic in a very direct and focused way during their final interviews. When relevant to the discussion, responses to other assignments throughout the semester that related to the topic of writing identity will also be included. In this section, representative responses that show participants' initial reflections and their developing writing identity will be presented and discussed in the following subsections:

Preliminary Descriptions
Indirect Descriptions at Mid-Term
Final Descriptions
Discussion of Description of Self as Writer (Writing Identity)

Preliminary Descriptions

When asked in the first interview to use an adjective that would describe them as writers, many responded in terms of their confusion about the the question ("I don't understand. . .I don't remember.") or their inability to write ("I don't have any words. I don't know.").

Some, like Marisa, just could not respond to the question: "To describe me. I don't know."
In an attempt to see if she could think of this topic in terms of writing identity in Language One, she was asked about herself as a writer in her L1, Spanish, to which she replied in the same manner: "[long pause] I don't know."

Rosa expressed discomfort when responding to this topic:

> Oh, I don't like that. I am at [City Community College]. I take English. I have to put I don't know how to write good. Some words I don't know how to write. Just that.

When she reported what came to mind when she reflected on herself as a writer, Elba responded in terms of the difficulty accomplishing writing: "Hard. I have to think a lot. To do it." Roberto, however, responded by reflecting on his need and his willingness to learn:

> I don't know too much. I try. I need a lot of help. I didn't write too much, just letters. . . not many. I need help.

Some like Sonia could only respond with a somewhat negative description: "I think I'm not a good writer. . .I'm

not very good at it." Elena's response was even more negative:

> I'm fail. . .Bad. Ya, bad. I'm very poor about that. I'm poor in writing because I don't know too much word [many words].

Perhaps, because the idea of writing identity was novel, incredulity at the thought of being considered a writer was a common response. One student-participant, Komi, kept describing other writers rather than himself. A few like Sonia openly questioned the very idea:

> Hmhmm. . .Saying that I know how to write? You're asking me if I really know how to write?

One exception to the above responses was Carita's. Even though she remarked that "I can't write too much" and need to "practice more writing in English," she mentioned that she wrote poems in Spanish (her L1), but would rip them up an throw them away. She described herself as a "sentimental" writer who had "feeling for people--especially kids and like to write about them." Unlike the other participants, Carita had sufficient sense of herself as a writer to venture a description of herself as a writer in L1. Still, the novelty of writing or her lack of confidence in L2 at the beginning of the semester kept her from fully acknowledging herself as a writer of English. Though Carita showed promise as a writer, her lack of confidence, frustration with the demands of learning formal English, and strongly-felt familial concerns proved to be insurmountable

obstacles for her. In her journal homework throughout the semester, she spontaneously chronicled her fears in learning ESL, her embarrassment and frustration when attempting to use English, and her familial concerns and resultant time conflicts. Perhaps her realization that she would repeat Level 3 ESL was the final frustration for her. At her report, she withdrew from the ESL program before the end of the semester in order to have more time for familial and domestic concerns during the forthcoming holiday season.

Indirect Descriptions at Mid-Term

The mid-term assignment on the topic of an imaginary excellent writer was intended as an indirect method of eliciting information about writing identity. By midterm participants had gained sufficient experience writing and sufficient confidence about expressing an opinion on this topic to respond more expansively than they had in the initial interview. As might be expected, they responded in terms of their writing experience during Writing Workshop or their experience as students in the ESL Program.

For example, Roberto remarked that an excellent writer would attend to various criteria when following the writing process:

> A person who is an excellent writer in ESL 3 class should be a writer who follows all the writing process very careful. . .A writer should chose an interesting topic and explain very good about what he is writing. Make the reader

> understand his thoughts. He has to organize his ideas in an excellent order. . . Write sentences putting together what goes together. . .The writer has to used example, evidence, expansion and close the writing in the proper way. . .maybe he had to write the mapping few times, or a free writing first.

They responded in terms of needs related to writing in a Second Language such as using appropriate vocabulary and correct grammar or the need to practice thinking in English rather than continually translating thoughts from L1 while writing. Some like Rita concentrated on word-level needs such as punctuation and spelling:

> He [a good writer] has to know the spelling very good, he don't write the wrong sentence. He is very careful with the punctuation.

Others like Soku remarked on thinking in L2:

> Of course, they [excellent writers] try to think in English. . .Certainly they practice writing more and more.

They responded in terms of the essentials of any academic experience such as following directions, paying attention ("always quiet during the class paying attention"), concentration, good listening ("must listen to the teacher when she is explaining [about] the class"), punctuality ("When this person has an assignment, this student he/she also bring the homework on time."), and taking the time needed to accomplish their work ("They must have a lot of free time.").

They mentioned personal qualities such as sincerity, responsibility ("always do their assignments"), and

motivation. Since their self-introductions had been compiled into a booklet and assignments had required reading and responding to each other's self-introductions, reflections on an excellent writer were sometimes based on their opinions of a particular classmate's writing. For example, Isabel wrote about the effect the writing of one classmate, Francesca, had on her as a reader. She could easily relate to that writer's work since her description of her native land evoked feelings and experiences she shared with the writer:

> She adds details about her country, Peru. I still remember that she was talking [writing] about that she goes out to pick up some apples with her family that sentence make me remember my country too, because I used to did the same when I lived in Puerto Rico.

Students remarked on qualities not specified within the ESL Writing Class syllabus in terms of their past definitions of excellent writing. A few like Isabel thought that neat papers and fine handwriting signified excellent writing:

> I choose her because she has a beautiful handwriting. . .All her works are very ordered and clean.

The above responses illustrated that the student-participants had begun to reflect on the writing process they had used and the qualities and skills needed to do excellent work in ESL Writing Class. Recorded in these responses were their incipient or emerging formulations of

ideas about writing that may have been instrumental in the development of a personal writing identity. Also, their experience writing by mid-term had helped them to form an image of themselves as writers.

Illustrative of this was Elena as she reflected on idea generation throughout her freewriting on the topic of an imaginary excellent writer. She used this mid-term assignment to reflect on the writing process she had used and her beginning realization of writing as a vehicle for thinking:

> Thinking in what you want to write first, thinking in Invention Strategies that mean create in your mind what you want to write and why. If you can't think about what you are writing in the paper do an automatic writing for facility. . .more ideas for write.
>
> Clustered list or mapping that mean if you have a lot of idea put in the paper make a mapping to see what idea for writing. Or make a free writing too, that's like automatic writing. Choose a topic. When you take a mapping you can see what topic you want to choose. Use your thinking with writing to list your ideas. . .where you really put your ideas that you think.
>
> Then write down on paper and put it in order these ideas. Think what you choose to be first, second, and third, etc. Later you write your first draft. When you finish to write, revise the draft to know if all is okay. If no, correct them [the mistakes]. . .

Final Descriptions

During the final interview, this topic was responded to with more specificity than in the first interview. In

preparation for the final interview student-participants reflected on a class brainstorming about "some things it takes to be a good writer." This class brainstorming resulted in the following ideas:

initiative
experience and practice
discipline and diligence
creative and imaginative
full of ideas
audience awareness
ability to interest the audience
    catches the reader's attention
    effective main idea sentence
friendly tone
    enjoyable to read
easy to understand
    appropriate vocabulary
effective topic choice
    clear explanation
    knowledgeable about topic

Participants then each selected and discussed "one quality of an excellent writer," either from that generated list or from any other sources of ideas about writing identity.

Soku's responses illustrated this movement toward specificity and a greater sense of writing identity from the beginning to the end of the semester. For example, during the first conference Soku responded with a confused "I don't remember." In an earlier discussion Soku had explained that, even though he studied English for ten years in Korea, he had primarily read and translated textbooks written in English, but had been tested in Korean rather than English.

Therefore, even though his study of English had been relatively extensive, it had offered him limited writing experience in English.

By midterm when he wrote his "Reflections on Writing Class," he remarked on his former inability to "start" to write and confusion about "which word" to use, but noted the present "little improvement." In his indirect description at midterm, he spoke of an excellent writer in terms of a person with an ability to utilize a process approach to writing similar to the one he had practiced and as one who would "think in English" rather than translate from Korean to English as he had previously done.

His ability to describe himself as a writer by this final conference may have resulted from a number of factors, including his greater facility with spoken and written English as well as his more developed writing identity. Whatever the reasons, by the final conference, he was able to respond with a clear description of himself as a sensitive and nostalgic writer:

> If I describe myself as a writer, I would like to say myself as a sensitive writer because I liked to writing something about my childhood.
>
> For example, I got idea for the instruction paper while I was thinking about memories of the boyhood. I also chose nostalgia for my term paper because it gave me comfort and happiness. Even though I can't express my feeling precisely, I love my memories of the past and desire [to] go back to my childhood. I guess I get all my ideas for my journal from this kind of feeling.

Another student, Sonia, had begun to develop a writing identity by the final conference. During the first conference, Sonia had responded with incredulity ("You're asking me if I really know how to write?") since the very thought of writing signaled the thought of a "problem" to her:

> I told you from the beginning. . . I have a problem with writing. When it comes to putting them [words] to papers, everything goes blank.
>
> . . .The writing is the hardest class for me because like I said, I'm not very good at it. I don't know how to express myself on paper.

By the final interview or conference, Sonia had begun to develop a positive writing identity, as is revealed in the following response, which contrasted with her remarks at the first of the semester that writing was the "hardest class" and she was "not very good at it:"

> I think that since I have started the writing class I think that I have improved a lot in writing. I started to like writing. . .I used to write a little bit but now I write a lot.
>
> . . .I will use a friendly tone when I write. Using a friendly tone in writing is very important because the people who are reading you[r] work will be interested in finishing the things you write. For example, when I write, I use words that are sensible to read. Another way is using sense of humor. I think that [people] likes to read things that could make them enjoy what they are reading, so that's why I would use a friendly tone.

From the first conference to the last, one participant persisted in responding to a question about herself as a writer with a concept of writing as transcription rather

than composition. Before enrolling in CCC, this participant, Rita, had been out of school for 15 years but lived in the U.S. for 20 years. During that time, her writing needs and experience in English had been limited to writing grocery lists and frustrated attempts to write notes to her children's teachers and letters to friends. Looking back on her experience, Rita remarked later that. . ."before this semester, I wasn't thinking about writing."

When asked about writing in the first interview, Rita responded in terms of writing as transcribing words one hears in a dictation:

> . . .I'm a good writer. Every time the person doesn't go fast, I can write what the person is saying. See myself I'm going real fast now. . .like listening to a dictation.

When asked about writing as composition (writing in which she would be "making up the words"), her response was quite different, yet it still did not reveal a sense of self-concept as a writer:

> I don't have any words. I don't know.

By the final conference, Rita's immediate response to a question about writing was similar to the above initial response in that she spoke in terms of transcription rather than composition:

> . . .if somebody read something for [to] me, to write it, it have to be [read] slowly.

However, there was some evidence that Rita had begun to think of herself as a writer. When responding in her

preinterview assignment for the final conference, Rita responded in terms of composition rather than transcription when she "mapped" what she would do when writing in the future:

List
Main idea
Outline
Introduction
Drafts
Organization
Word Level
Good Spelling
Punctuation
Conclusion

In the following dialogue excerpted from the final conference, Rita's developing writing identity became evident. After encouragement through the ensuing dialogue, Rita acknowledged her ability to generate ideas, using two particular papers of hers that exemplified this ability--her self-introduction and description of her daughter (Interviewer is abbreviated "I." below):

> I.: You said one quality [of an excellent writer]. Now, how about another one that you have used in another paper or even in the same one so you could tell me about your own writing? [Reading from the assignment sheet. . .] "Support your quality with evidence and examples."
>
> Rita: I think I did pretty good in my self-introduction too.
>
> I.: That's what I want to know about--the quality. Tell me what was good about it.
>
> Rita: That is something I don't know how to explain.
>
> I.: How about any of these ideas or any other? Did you show something?

Rita: Because when I write, I don't write about any one topic. I wrote it all together. Like one sentence one thing then finish that sentence and write about something else like you told me on one of the notes like I write a lot of ideas but I don't write about one thing jumping different things. Pretty hard for me to explain.

I.: So you have ideas, but what you are saying is that you need organization.

Rita: Something like that because I don't have organization in my mind.

I. So you have to work at it.

. . .I'd say that what you said is that you have a lot of ideas. Is that right?

Rita: Ya. I had ideas and I didn't know I had them.

I.: So that's one quality that a good writer needs. If you don't have a lot of ideas, you can't say that much about a subject. You know, you could have the writing perfect, but it's not that good because there aren't enough ideas. . . The ideas are the foundation. Without the ideas, you could do everything else right, but forget it. The ideas are important. . . .So think of a paper where you did have a lot of ideas, evidence, [or] examples. Think of your papers and think of one where you did have a lot of ideas about the topic.

Rita: Well, the self-introduction.

. . .Yes, because I talk about I like to travel, I talk about my kids, where I live in Puerto Rico--a few things I talk about it.

I.: So you had a lot of ideas.

Rita: Yes.

I.: Were there any other papers that you would say showed you having a lot of ideas?

Rita: There were only two papers. There was that one and the one I wrote about my daughter. I got a lot of ideas there, too.

I. Those two you really got a lot of ideas for.

Rita: Ya, them two. That you told me to rewrite it again and take some of them ideas and put it in paragraphs.

. . .In that one [description of her daughter], you told me that I ah supposed to put a conclusion, so I did it. Put some examples and put a conclusion.

Since Rita's daughter was present during the interview, with permission from Rita, the paper was read-aloud to her daughter, thus reinforcing the concept that Rita was a writer both to her and her daughter, who was pleased to hear this description. It is noteworthy that lengthy oral dialogue between the instructor and Rita outside of class at individual tutoring sessions served to prompt written expansion of two papers discussed during these tutoring sessions. Previous to the oral dialogues mentioned, Rita's written production during Writing Workshop was negligible. Since Rita also freely expressed her preference for oral communication, it is reasonable to assume that these oral discussions were an impetus to both her actual and perceived successful accomplishment of those two particular papers.

By the final conference, Rita remained firm in her conviction that spoken discourse was preferable to written discourse; however, she had begun to see writing as composition and had begun to see herself as a writer--even though that still meant seeing herself as a writer who needed to learn more:

> I don't write well because I don't have experience in writing. I need more practice for improvement.

Unlike Rita, another student-participant, Elizabeth, thought writing English was preferable to speaking it. Throughout the semester, Elizabeth repeatedly remarked that writing was easier since it allowed her added time to formulate her ideas in English. During the first interview, Elizabeth responded to the question about writing identity by expressing how difficult it was to answer such a question: "It's a hard one. Can't think of anything."

Whether Elizabeth had difficulty with thinking of herself as a writer, simply talking about that idea at that time, or both remains an unanswered question. Clearly, Elizabeth did experience difficulty speaking during each interview, especially during the first one. Her difficulty presented itself in various ways, differing from Bae and Juanita who had more limited proficiency in speaking and comprehending spoken English. When Elizabeth would finally respond during an interview, her responses were brief like Juanita and Bae's; however, she tended to formulate very easy to understand grammatically correct sentences. Perhaps the speed necessary for spoken conversation in comparison to written discourse was the predominant challenge during an interview for Elizabeth, as she remarked below during the first interview:

> Okay, my problem is when I'm going to talk with somebody is hard for me to. . .for a long conversation.
>
> . . .I think it's because I'm afraid of talking English.
>
> . . .But I take my time doing that [writing].

When she responded to a question about her attitude towards writing in terms of her comfort and enjoyment, Elizabeth may have more than an inkling of a writing identity as early as the third week of the semester.

> I feel very comfortable because I like English and I like writing English.

However, when writing her "Reflections on Writing Class" at midterm, she commented that previously she had been inexperienced in "real writing" (composition):

> I've never made a real writing before, but now I either can make an automatic writing or freewriting.

When asked to describe herself in writing in the preinterview assignment for the final conference, her response showed that Elizabeth had not only come to see herself as a writer but had come to see herself as a writer in a positive way:

> Sometimes I think fast. That gives me the opportunity to write about anything. [I have an open mind.] I don't forget things easily.
>
> Like I said before, I think fast and when you used to give us the little book to write about one specific thing, I felt so familiar with the topic that I could write with no problem.

> For me, I think I would be creative and [have] initiative. For example, on a job, I could bring new ideas on how the employees could improve their relationship with the boss.

From the beginning to the end of the semester, Elena's self-concept as a writer changed dramatically. During the first conference, Elena spoke of herself as a failure who was "poor" in writing as noted earlier in the "Preliminary Descriptions" above:

> Sometimes I know how to say it, but I don't know how to write it. Because I learn how to speak--not to write.

By midterm, Elena had begun to think as a writer as she reflected in her "Indirect Description at midterm" as cited previously. Excerpts of her three-page freewriting on an imaginary excellent writer showed her developing a sense of what a writer does. She saw a writer as a person who "thought" about his/her writing, who followed a certain process or "steps," and who thought of an audience or "reader":

> . . .Thinking in what you have to write first, thinking in Invention strategies. That mean create in your mind what you want to write and why. If you can't think about what you are writing in the paper, do an automatic writing for facility more ideas for to write.
>
> . . .Choose a topic. When you take a mapping, you can see what topic you want to choose. Use your thinking with writing to list your ideas
>
> . . .If you see that person who do all the steps, for examples, check the main idea, develop [it with] examples, evidence, expansion and the closing or conclusion of that ideas. That [those components] they make a paragraph. If all are

> organize, in very order to present to any one who want to read are because their writing are very clear and understanding [understandable].

A more cogent expression of Elena's developing writing identity at midterm was her spontaneous comment at the beginning of the second conference: "I can write. I know now I can believe it."

By the third conference, Elena had developed a firm sense of herself as a writer. She knew she had plenty of work to do regarding learning the English language; however, her sense of writing identity was well developed:

> Now I say remember last time we say write it you ask me how I think of myself as a writer I told you I was fail and now I am good because now I know and now I'm very glad to know.
>
> . . .I told you I was fail. You now you ask me. . .When you ask me that question I tell you I feel like I'm fail, you know, [as] a writer because I don't know how to write.
>
> . . .And I was bad and now I know I not so good like you because you are. . .you knew the language but I know I can defend myself. . .defend in writing.

remarks about the ability to "defend" herself suggested that Elena had developed an awareness of audience. She could explain her opinion and elaborate on her ideas when writing, making her writing more comprehensible to a reader (her audience).

Again during this conference, Elena spoke of the steps in writing that she could accomplish. Furthermore, she remarked that there were particular writing accomplishments

that ranged from freewriting for journal homework responses to other types of writing that she had experienced that semester:

> As a writer, I'm describing myself as a good writer. Because before this semester, I did not know about writing. Now, I getting very surprised about writing. I wrote a lot. . .For instance, I wrote narrative, description, imagination, direction [instruction] paper, and different categories. Now, I know how to write a formal paper. I'm glad myself to learn something new. . .I'm happy.

Elena spent the time necessary to write to her best ability. For example, she spent seven hours writing her abstract term paper defining "Responsibility," which had also entailed earlier prewriting work during Writing Workshop and had involved interviewing two people outside of class. In the following response during the final interview, she spoke of how she was willing to spend the time she needed to make her writing as close to perfect as possible to please both herself and her instructor:

> If I need ten [hours], I will do [that] 'cause when I wrote that one I wrote the paper first. I read that one again and again. When I feel that it [is] right, I put it.
>
> . . .I start three o'clock and finish at ten. Seven hours with that paper and my bother-in-law [said] "You will stay again with that one?" I have to do perfect because the teacher like everything perfect. I tell her [him--or the reference may be to her sister] where she [the teacher] from. I tell her [him] she's Greek and American. [He said] "I knew it. The Greeks want everything perfect."

Elena had grown from a writer whose self-perception was one of failure to a writer who had pride in her accomplishments and a willingness to take the time needed to do her best.

Pride and enthusiasm were evident in her conversation about particular papers such as her description of her sister, a narrative about a childhood event during the celebration of "The Three Magic Kings" [The Magi], and the definition paper about responsibility. Elena's description of herself as a writer had become realistic and positive to a degree that could be described as joyful.

Discussion of Description of Self as Writer (Writing Identity)

At the beginning of the semester, most students did not have previous experience writing in English, especially in composition. Consequently, it was difficult to learn about participants' self-concept as writers from responses to a direct questioning about that topic at that time. These student-participants did not seem to have a concept of themselves as writers at this early stage. Posing the question may have planted the idea of a writing identity for them to continue to reflect upon throughout the semester and allowed this researcher to discover just how they thought of themselves as writers at that time. The virtual

nonexistence of a concept of writing identity was not that surprising given their limited experience with written English.

Another obstacle to gathering information from this direct question may have been students' reticence in talking about themselves. This reticence could have been due to insecurity about their abilities or constraints from their past cultural experience which restricted acknowledgement of their abilities. Also, the assertiveness necessary to answer such a direct question might take longer than one semester to develop.

The responses to the more indirect assignment about an imaginary excellent writer at midterm seemed to provide an avenue for reflection about writing identity in terms of their present experience. By then student-participants had learned writing terminology or vocabulary with which to discuss such a concept. For the most part, they described an excellent writer in terms of steps utilized in the draft-by-draft approach they had experienced in Writing Workshop. For example, they described an excellent writer as a person who followed the steps practiced during ESL Writing Class, which included carefully choosing topics, having many ideas and developing those ideas, writing in an organized manner, reading carefully over what was written, and revising draft-by-draft. Their responses also revealed that they believed

that an excellent writer was a serious student who was punctual, attentive, sincere, responsible, and highly motivated.

Their sense of writing identity developed in stages. First, they felt too inexperienced to qualify as writers of English. By mid-term, they seemed to be searching for their way with writing through the experience of ESL Writing Class. They emphasized what they had learned about a process approach to writing when they described an excellent writer as one who had mastered each step of the writing process they had practiced. By the final interview, the student-participants had begun to see themselves as writers. In preparation for the final interview, they read through their journal homework and Writing Workshop papers to see what they had accomplished. Their responses during this final interview contrasted with their confusion and incredulity at the idea of being considered writers at the beginning of the semester. By this time, they had had personal experience to draw upon when responding. When Soku replied he was nostalgic, when Sonia thought she used a friendly tone, and when Elena expressed a willingness to work until her paper was understandable, their responses reflected their concern about their writing as composition that others would read. This awareness of audience indicated a comparatively sophisticated concept of personal writing identity.

However, the development of a writing identity can not be seen in isolation as simple reflection and responses to the questions directed to this specific topic but, rather, as part of the entire experience of ESL Writing Class, which emphasized constant reflection about their learning (metacognition) in terms of attitude and self-direction as well as writing identity.

Self-Direction (Self-Evaluation and Planning)

This section of this study will report the findings concerning student self-direction under the following subheadings:

Interviewing Language
Self-Evaluation and Planning
Discussion of Self-Direction (Self-Evaluation and Planning)

Specifically, representative responses regarding student-participants' self-evaluation and planning related to strengths and needs in writing will be reported and discussed. Because change was inherent in the process of reflection on this topic (especially during interviews or conferences), the findings on self-direction are the most complex to describe. Since the dialogue of the interviews was an integral part of self-evaluating and planning, the next section will describe the interviewing language and techniques, including representative responses. Later, a subsection will describe representative responses by using

excerpts of dialogues during the interviews. Also, some specific strengths and needs and the learning strategies or planning will be illustrated through the dialogues presented.

Interviewing Language

Questioning participants about self-direction was exploratory; therefore, questions were asked in an open-ended way to allow for maximum variability and individuality of responses. The ensuing dialogue between the interviewer and the participant determined the nature of subsequent comments by the interviewer. Certain interviewing techniques were used in order to aid students in their self-direction in ESL Writing Class, specifically in the areas of self-evaluation and planning concerning writing strengths and needs. ("I." will be used for "Interviewer," or teacher-researcher, when citing dialogues throughout this section.)

The dialogue between the teacher-researcher and student-participants during interviews served as an "intervention" (Wenden 1983), which provided a vehicle for positive changes in self-evaluation and planning as well as a means of gathering data. Since the first interviews revealed the participants' difficulty with the acknowledgement of writing strengths and needs, an emphasis

was placed on encouraging the participants and eliciting more response from them during subsequent interviews.

Interviewing techniques of encouragement were intended to lead initially insecure students to positive self-assessments and to reinforce students' successful evaluation and planning. Interviewing techniques of elicitation were used to elicit expansion or elaboration of an interview topic in order to clarify students' meaning and to verify the meaning of the responses for the interviewer. These techniques will be described under the following headings:

Encouragement
Elicitation

Encouragement

In various ways, students were encouraged to see themselves in a positive light regarding their writing accomplishments. For each student, there was always some accomplishment that served as seed that could flower into a writing strength acknowledged in ESL Writing Class. To expand the possible choices in self-evaluations, writing strengths included steps or stages before the actual drafting of a paper, including prewriting and thinking. In some instances, prewriting included a student's ability to generate ideas when speaking, whether or not this ability had been demonstrated in the writing itself. Interviewing

techniques of encouragement will be described under the following subheadings:

Categorization of Writing Strengths
Acknowledgment of a Stated Strength
Reinforcement
Reminder of Other Accomplishments
Positive Thinking
Pragmatic Approach

Categorization of Writing Strengths. If the dialogue during the interview suggested that a student needed encouragement in order to start thinking about possible strengths or possible plans to improve, the interviewer mentioned specific writing progress already evident in the student's work by categorizing participants' specific accomplishments into categories of writing strengths. For example, when asked to itemize her strengths, Marisa answered with a global negative statement: "A lot I don't know." Here, the most appropriate interviewer response seemed to be a reminder of specific progress in choosing a topic and brainstorming for ideas:

> I.: Well, when I asked you to think about a topic, were you able to do that? You went home and tried to think of three topics.

Then Marisa readily recalled something she had accomplished with ease: brainstorming three possible topics for the next writing assignment.

The next step in encouraging language during this particular interview was based on Marisa's response. The interviewer categorized the strength her accomplishment

exhibited (brainstorming for ideas): "So you can get ideas for what to write?" Marisa then agreed that getting ideas was a strength (or something she could accomplish). This student-participant then acknowledged this strength in herself by replying that it had been one of the "easiest" components of writing for her.

When interviewing a student who repeatedly itemized writing needs when asked about strengths, the interviewer would give a reminder of an accomplishment, as in the following interviewer response:

> I.: Right now, I want you to concentrate on what you can do. What you can do is get ideas. If you had to tell me and talk, you could tell me, right?

Generally, the student-participant recognized his/her strength when reminded. For example, Rosa (the student-participant who had spoken in the above dialogue) readily agreed that verbalizing her ideas when speaking had indeed been a strength for her.

Acknowledgement of a Stated Strength. Generally, after a repetition and/or variation of the question about strengths, a student would find something that he/she was capable of doing in ESL Writing Class. When a student said something that was considered a writing strength, whether the student himself/herself had perceived it as a strength or not, it was acknowledged by the interviewer. The

following excerpt of a representative dialogue is illustrative of this acknowledging procedure.

> I.: You'll try.
>
> Komi: Ya, I'll try.
>
> I.: Well, that's a strength. The fact that you. . .if you're given an assignment, then you will do your best to do it. Okay, I call that a strength in writing. You won't give up, will you?
>
> Komi: No.

Reinforcement of Positive Evaluation. When the student himself/herself actually acknowledged a strength, this acknowledgement was reinforced by the interviewer through repetition or restatement of that strength. For example, when Bae acknowledged her ability to express her feelings in writing, an acknowledgement of this writing strength was reinforced by the interviewer through a restatement of that ability:

> Bae: I can write whatever inside.
>
> I.: You can express the thoughts, feelings that you have.

Reminder of Previous Accomplishments. There were occasions when encouraging language meant reminding students of their previous accomplishments in ESL Writing Class. During her second interview, Rita kept on remarking how difficult writing had been for her. The interviewer responded by reminding her of her success in revising for omissions through her evaluation and planning, implying that she also would find other academic endeavors easier with

similar attention to individual learning strategies. Earlier in the semester, she had discovered a strategy to compensate for the difficulty she had when transcribing her thoughts to writing during homework assignments. When she wrote journal homework, she had often omitted words. By carefully proofreading her homework, she had begun to self-correct for these omissions. She was reminded of her successful evaluation and planning:

> I.: Okay, what's good about what you're doing, Rita, is you have learned something to do that makes it easier. It's a strategy you can use. . .I noticed you were getting your homework done more easily.

Since Rita was feeling discouraged about her writing progress, this reminder of her previous successful evaluation (omission of words), planning (proofreading carefully), and subsequent practice in this one area was intended to offer the possibility that she would be successful in other areas in the future.

Positive Thinking. Sometimes, encouraging language meant a gentle request to think positively: "Now, I want you to think of something positive about you and writing." Other times, this encouragement would involve a comment about the present progress of the student. For example, when Francesca exhibited a pained facial expression as she struggled to speak in English, the interviewer coaxed her along by saying, "You're doing fine so far."

Pragmatic Approach. On another occasion, encouraging language took the form of pragmatism about language learning and ESL writing, which often meant a pragmatic reminder that learning to write took time and effort. When Rosa doubted she really understood the meaning of composing a main idea sentence, the interviewer encouraged her by explaining that the meaning would become clearer through her practical experience:

> I.: It takes time. We'll practice with each paper. By the end of the semester, you should know what it means. You'll keep on learning it a little more and a little more.

Elicitation

In order to elicit a response or an elaboration of a response from an insecure or reticent participant, the following techniques were used. These techniques will be described under the following subheadings:

> Repetition (Paraphrasing and Restating Question)
> Itemization of the Writing Process

Repetition (Paraphrasing and Restating Question). In response to a student's difficulty in acknowledging a strength, the question would first be repeated by paraphrasing the question. For example, Komi responded to the question, "What are your strengths in writing?," by describing a grammar need:

> Ahm. I think that just that. . .just little words like "a", "an". . .different words like "a", "an",

"the". . .I think that is my problems when I am writing something.

When questioned again about his strengths by asking, "What is it you <u>can</u> do?," Komi responded by making sure he had heard the question correctly:

Can't do? Can not?

After clarifying that he was being called upon to respond to what he could do or was able to accomplish in writing, he was again asked to say something about his strengths by varying the statements intended to elicit a response to the topic in question:

I.: You have something you can do. Say something positive about your writing. That's what I want to hear.

Still, the following response was evidence that acknowledging his strengths was almost impossible for him:

Komi: I understand, but I think if you gave me some topics and writing. . .well, I try. Search in the dictionary or. . .I don't know what to say.

<u>Itemization of Writing Process</u>. Another interviewing technique used to elicit a response regarding strengths was to itemize the components of an assignment the entire class had completed in ESL Writing Class and, then, to ask which of these the particular student had accomplished. The following dialogue between the teacher-researcher and Marisa illustrated this procedure:

I.: What do you know how to do in writing, Marisa?

Marisa: What did I know how to write in English? In writing?

I.: What kind of things would you say that you know?

Marisa: A lot I don't know.

I.: Well, when I asked you to think about a topic, were you able to do that? You went home and you tried to think of three topics.

Marisa: Yes.

I.: So you can get ideas for what to write?

Marisa: Ya.

I.: That's one of the things you can do. Was it hard?

Marisa: No.

I.: No?

Marisa: It was the easiest homework.

I.: . . .So can you think of anything now that I gave you some things that you know how to do about writing? Can you think of some things that you can do that are strong points in writing for you?

Marisa: Something that I can do, huh?

I.: When you had to do something like tell someone how to do something. When you thought of it, how about trying to get it organized into an order? How did you feel? Were you able to do that?

Marisa: Ah, it was all right.

I.: How about your organization in other papers in Spanish? Were you able to organize? Was that something you could do? [Or] you need to work on?

Marisa: I think I have to work on it.

I.: Yes, but you can, after you look at it. . .after you write something, can you look at it, and then decide what's the best thing to go "first," "second," "third"?

Marisa: Yes.

I.: Yes, so most people don't organize in the beginning. They have to think about it. So that is something you can do. Maybe you have to work on it too. So you have an understanding? Is that true?

Marisa: Yes.

Self-Evaluation and Planning

Due to the variability of writing ability and the individual differences that these writers, or any population, would exhibit when asked to self-evaluate and plan, there was a high variability of responses. An analysis of their responses showed that, initially, most were unable to evaluate themselves positively and tended to evaluate their needs in terms so general, or global, that specific planning was thwarted. As the semester progressed, most students' growth in self-direction was illustrated by more specific self-evaluations and planning. Also, by the end of the semester, many felt confident enough of their writing abilities or potential to evaluate themselves in an empowering way. Their responses when self-evaluating and planning will be discussed in the following categories:

Inability to Evaluate Positively
Global Evaluation
Specific Evaluation
Global Planning
Specific Planning
Empowering Evaluation

Inability to Evaluate Positively

At first, most students found it difficult--if not impossible--to articulate any writing strengths they had. Sometimes, a student did not seem to hear the question, since she or he would respond in terms of needs instead of strengths. As shown in the previous subsection on interviewing language, in order to elicit an answer to this question, interviewing techniques were used that varied depending on the subsequent responses by the participants.

During the first interview most students found it almost impossible to think of any writing strength, which was not surprising since both the experiences of self-evaluating and writing were new. Lack of experience in speaking in English may also have hampered them. When asked to state his writing strengths, one student, Komi, kept answering the question very specifically by explaining what he could not do well. The following excerpt of a dialogue during the first interview illustrated Komi's initial inability to discover and reflect upon a strength he possessed:

> I.: How about if I asked you. . .about writing still. . .what are you able to do in writing? What do you think you can do well? Name something you can do.
>
> Komi: Ahm. I think that just the little words like "a" ("an"). . .different words like "a" ("an") and "the." I think that is my problems when I am writing something.

I.: Yes, okay, that's something you need to work on. . .

Komi: You can find when I writing the listening journal or some other things, you can find that. I always mistake "a" and "an."

I.: Yes, I know all the articles. Those are called "articles."

Komi: Articles.

I.: Yes, . . .and the prepositions. Yes, I've seen that. You leave them out or put other ones in. That's something that is difficult.

Komi: Difficult?

I.: Yes. [Discussion about articles and prepositions followed]

Komi: When I speak something and I don't know what preposition to say. . .I don't care. . .well. . .if somebody heard it or not.

I.: You try to say it quietly so somebody can't hear it?

Komi: Yes. [More discussion about this topic]

I.: . . .What I'm asking you now. . .I'm trying to ask you anyway. . .I want to know, if you think about yourself and writing, you told me what you need to work on. . .you told me what you need in writing. . .

Komi: Yes.

I.: But I want you to think about what it is that you can do?

Komi: Can't do. Can not?

I.: No, can. . .have the ability already.

Komi: Oh.

I.: What do you already know about writing? What can you do and you can build on what you already know? What is something that you already can do in writing? You have something. . .something

positive to say about your writing. That's what I want to hear.

Komi: I understand, but I think if you gave me some topics and writing. . .well, I try. Search in the dictionary, or I don't know how to say. . .

I.: You'll try?

Komi: Ya, I'll try.

I.: Well, that's a strength. The fact that if you're given an assignment, then you will do your best to do it. Okay, I call that a strength in writing. You won't give up, will you?

Komi: No.

Another student, Marisa, illustrated this inability to acknowledge her strengths when she, like Komi, answered in global terms of what she did not know rather than in terms of what she did know: "A lot I don't know."

The following dialogue between teacher-researcher and student-participant most comprehensively illustrated the inability to perceive a strength by a student and exemplified the type of interviewing procedures used to engage the student in a dialogue that would lead to an acknowledgement of a strength. Such an acknowledgement could be critical to the development of a student's positive self-concept as a writer (Rudman 1982, 1983, Moran 1983-4, McCarthy, Meier & Rinderer 1985). Once he/she has perceived an accomplishment of at least one component of a writing task, one step has been taken towards building a positive writing identity.

In the following interview representative of a student-participant's inability to evaluate positively, the dialogue continued until the student, Rita, had a glimmer of a realization of some success that she had already experienced in her work in the ESL Writing Class. Rita needed to discover one of her strengths before she could follow with planning on how to use that strength to her advantage. A writing strength and her awareness of that particular strength became tools for planning for improvement in writing. In the following dialogue, Rita moved from the self-evaluation or consciousness of a total inability in writing in English to the potentially empowering awareness that began with the acknowledgement of at least one specific strength she possessed in ESL writing:

I.: What are you able to do?

Rita: In writing? Nothing.

I. Could you think of a topic?

Rita: No, it was hard to think of a topic. . .

I: In class today, were you able to think of the ideas [after you had your topic]. . .of what you wanted to write about? Is that something you could do?

Rita: It was hard.

I.: When you did get the ideas, when you looked at it, did you think you could get it organized--do it in an organized way? Like in order. . .?

Rita: No.

I.: How about in Spanish?

Rita: Well, I think I need to work on that too. . .on organization.

I.: All right. So you're not sure what your strengths are yet. . .But you do write something. You had ideas on this [pointing to her writing sample on the desk].

Rita: Yes, I write something, yes. But it is something that when you said to write something without stopping. See, I write something that comes to my mind, but not in order.

I.: So you find it easier to write an automatic writing?

Rita: Ya.

I.: Okay, so that's something you can do. When you're writing, and you know all you are doing is thinking of any ideas that come into your head.

Rita: Then I write it down.

I.: So one of the strengths that you have is in brainstorming and you know all you are doing is thinking of any ideas that come into your head. You are able to. . .so one of the strengths you have is brainstorming. All right. Is that a strength?

Rita: In a way.

I.: I know you are getting ideas, and I'm trying to acknowledge that there are some things that you can do. And I want you to acknowledge it too.

Global Evaluation

In their initial responses, students often answered in a global way when asked about strengths and needs, which left no foundation for concrete planning. Students would answer that they needed to work on writing in general or global terms rather than discuss a particular need. For

example, when asked what he needed to work on in writing, Komi responded globally, "I think I need more work in writing." Another student, Bae answered in a similar manner: "Writing and reading." The following response from Bae during the first conference when asked how she felt about writing was actually a global evaluation of her needs:

> I'd like to get more. . .more learn writing. I need more.

A few evaluated themselves by responding globally in their L1 (Spanish), as Carita did in the following response:

> Leer mas. . . . Y mas escribir en ingles. [more reading and writing in English]

While these students did need to work on writing (and reading), such global evaluations did not allow for planning for improvement. It was impossible to make a plan for improvement writing until a particular strength or need had been acknowledged. Each student needed to see his/her experience concretely, or in discrete parts, before he/she could make a realistic plan.

Specific Evaluation

The beginnings of more specific evaluations were evident by the second interview or conference. For example, Bae was able to acknowledge a specific writing strength: "automatic writing." In her very next response, her limited proficiency in English did not prevent her from accurately assessing some of her specific writing needs:

> But it's hard to, you know, put together. That's the hard part. I can do [automatic writing]. It's very hard to put together one.

Although Bae acknowledged her difficulty putting her thoughts into words and putting her words into full sentences in L2, she realized that she had begun to express her ideas through automatic writing, which formed a foundation upon which to build a composition. Shortly afterward during that second conference, she acknowledged that beginning to write was a difficult step in the writing process:

> Starting is hard. When I get started, it all right.

By midterm, another student, Elizabeth, had begun to realize some of her specific accomplishments in writing. In a homework assignment about reflections on writing class, Elizabeth compared her lack of experience with writing previously with her present confidence in the beginning steps used in class, automatic writing and freewriting:

> I've never made a real writing before, but now I either can make an automatic writing or a free writing.

In her reflections about what she learned she listed her writing strengths and needs in specific ways, potentially providing a foundation for concrete planning. In the following list, she evaluated her ability to organize, choose a topic, make an outline (or grouped-list of ideas), and ability to narrow her topic:

> I've learned a lot. For example, in our self-introduction how to organized and how to put the right sentences together.
>
> I did know how to choose a topic, but now I think I could do it better like you said, the more practice you get the better you can do.
>
> I think I'm still confused doing my outline. Most of the time I do a summary instead of an outline.
>
> I will like to know more about describing a person. What you describe and so on. If you're talking about a romantic, don't start talking about her five kids driving her up the wall. (That's what I learn.)

By the third interview, most students were specific in their self-evaluations. Soku outlined the specific steps in writing that he had mastered by the end of the semester, and looked forward to the continuing development of his writing skill through these steps:

> I've learned many things such as mapping, automatic writing, and freewriting. First of all, I learned writing steps, continuing outline, organization, and revision. I think I can develop my writing skill through these steps.

Another student, Isabel, evaluated her needs in grammar, which she realized had made her writing appear less sophisticated than the ideas she had expressed:

> I know that I need to improve my grammar skills; for example, how to use the verb tenses and correct vocabulary. But I am working hard on that area and I'm going to continue that. For example, I'm going to spend more time on reading and listening to learn new skills and to use those that I know. Now, I am reading and studying the second level books to learn the things that I need to know in order to improve my grammar.

In the above response, Isabel mentioned the specific areas in grammar she needed to work on, verb tenses and vocabulary, which narrowed her needs sufficiently to allow her to follow through with a realistic plan for improvement.

Global Planning

When student-participants were aware of specific strengths or needs, they sometimes would still make a plan that was global. If the plan did not seem specific enough to be put into effect, then the interviewer would engage in dialogue intended to lead the student to a decision about a more concrete plan.

One example of a need many ESL students acknowledged was the need to learn more vocabulary. Isabel and others responded with a similar global plan to "read the English" to remedy the need for more vocabulary. In contrast to her specific evaluation about needs in grammar described previously, which allowed her to suggest a specific plan (studying from a Level 2 ESL grammar book), her initial response about planning during the second conference was global or general. In the following dialogue that took place during the second interview, Isabel moved from a global to a specific plan--a plan specific enough to put into effect:

> I.: How are you going to learn more vocabulary. . .I want you to be more specific. how are you going to go about doing this?

Isabel: I can read the English.

I.: What are you going to read?

Isabel: Newspapers, magazines, books.

I.: How often are you going to read them?

Isabel: Everyday, everyday, I read a newspaper.

I.: And what about the magazines and the books that you said?

Isabel: Is not everyday. Two or three days a wéek.

I.: And what are you going to do? Did you say books? Did I hear you say "books"?

Isabel: I read two books a month.

I.: That's what you are going to do, right?

Isabel: I am doing.

I.: But you are going to continue?

Isabel: Yes, but now I'm going to pay more attention to the words. Understand what I mean?

I.: So when you read, you're going to continue to do this in order to learn more vocabulary. We're talking about vocabulary, first of all. So. . . two books a month.

As she was encouraged to describe her plan, she specified that she would "pay more attention to the words" when she read a newspaper daily, a magazine two or three days a week, and two books a month. Her initial global plan to "read" English was refined to a very concrete plan through the ensuing dialogue that encouraged clarification and/or specification of these plans.

Specific Planning

There was an overall movement from global to more specific planning as the student-participants moved through the semester. This was evident even with a writer who was experiencing extreme difficulty with ESL Writing Class. For example, one such writer, Bae, began with very global plans for improvement ("keep writing") during the first interview:

> Okay, like step by step and we can. . .I can write writing just like you say now. . .automatic writing and things. [If] I keep writing, I think I get it. I notice. Even a little bit. Keep writing always I know get better. Ya.

By the second interview, Bae had begun to get more specific in her planning. In her responses, she proposed a plan to help her with two writing needs: getting started with her writing homework (Journal Homework) and generating ideas. She thought it might help if she first began to write quickly without worrying about neatness or what ideas came to mind (automatic writing). In the plans outlined in the following response, she decided to practice automatic writing and to observe actual people, things and situations to help her write her homework assignment more quickly and easily:

> Bae: Idea. Or something write. Write about some main idea. I can write like sloppy. I can write right away. [If] I have example, then I can write. But if I don't have any example--just writing--it's hard.
>
> I.: So how are you going to get an idea faster?

> Bae: Something. The point. Material. You know, something material. like you know, things. I'm going to write [about something in] front.
>
> I.: Look at something?
>
> Bae: Yes.

During this dialogue about Bae's plans for getting started and generating ideas more quickly, "mapping" was acknowledged as a writing strength that might help her with these needs. Bae planned to utilize mapping to discover a writing topic:

> I. Okay, look at something and then write. This is your plan. Okay, we talked about automatic writing and how to get ideas more quickly. [Reading her list on her preinterview paper. . .] "Other techniques. . .Clustered list. . . a mapping." Is that [mapping] one of the things you can do?
>
> Bae: Yes.
>
> I.: So if you are going to get ideas, how can you use this mapping?
>
> Bae: Yes. Mapping first. Then I get idea. Write it down. Write it down. Then I can choose what I going to write.

Through Bae's brainstorming of ideas during the dialogue, a plan unfolded in a nonlinear fashion that could be carried out step-by-step: Bae would map ideas or observe an actual person, object, or situation to help her choose a topic for her journal writing, and she would use automatic writing to decrease her inhibitions about getting started since automatic writing demanded less initial concern with neatness and form.

By the second interview, other more proficient student-participants had also begun to acknowledge their strengths and reflect on ways to use these strengths to their advantage. For example, Rita knew that she was able to brainstorm for ideas with a mapping (or clustered list). During the dialogue that followed this acknowledgement, she planned ways she would use this ability in future writing:

> I.: Okay, one of the things you know how to do is a "mapping." [A strength listed on her preinterview assignment for Conference 2] Since you know how to do this, how can you use this to continue to improve in writing.
>
> Rita: Well, I will use it because. . .for. . .every time I try to write on something, and I don't know exactly what I'm going to write about, then I just make a map. Then, if I'm going to write on my daughter, (like you told me) I can write around what is, what she do, or whatever I can think of. Then after I do that I just could take. . .,make a list down. Then I do things like "a". . . "b". . . What do you call that?
>
> I.: Outline?
>
> Rita: Outline. Then I put everything together. Like everything that goes together.
>
> I.: When you're not sure what you're going to write, you'll use the "mapping" to brainstorm.
>
> Rita: Yes, then I make the outline. Then I write from the outline what goes "first," what goes "second." Then like that and then I can make a paragraph.

By the second interview, Elena had also evaluated her writing in specific ways. When brainstorming with automatic writing, she was prolific. However, a difficulty she perceived was in organization of the many pages of ideas she

would write. Her individualized planning was based on her specific needs. She decided the best strategy would be to reflect on a tentative organization before she began to write, as she reported in the following dialogue with the interviewer:

> Elena: Every time I want to write, I will do like that--like I told you--before I will do that automatic writing and my freewriting and outline. I will do before. Sometime I do that, but sometime I do that in my mind. In my mind thinking what I want first. Later, when I thinking what I want to do, I write the five-minute automatic writing in the book [an in-class exercise]. When you talk, I thinking what I want to write. I organize in my mind. Everything comes then.
>
> I.: So, when it's time to write, when you're going to do an automatic writing, what are you going to do?
>
> Elena: Think before what I want in my brain. . .organize ideas what I want to do.

Her plan to think about organization first seemed useful since Elena had often moved through seven or eight drafts before finishing a paper.

By the third interview, most student-participants had developed the ability to plan specifically for themselves. One of the clearest plans came from Sonia, who had reflected on the process she planned to use when writing in the future. Her sophistication about the writing process was evident from her decision that her process would differ depending on her writing project. Considerations involved how much background knowledge she would have and how much

information she would need about a particular topic as she began to write. She discussed the following plan with the interviewer:

> Sonia: . . .It depends on how the paper's going to be. . how much information you're going to need. Now, first of all, . . . in Spanish. . .I don't have that much problem, so I don't know if I [will] do anything differently or not. But, in English, I will. First, I will write, then I'll revise, and see if the words are right.
>
> . . .My strength is brainstorming. I think that, when I do a brainstorm, I get ideas I need to write a paper. I will keep on using this step in the future for when I have to write a paper in my other classes.

Empowering Evaluation

By the final interview, most participants readily acknowledged their strengths and improvement in writing. This self-knowledge, which had developed through their own self-reflections and encouragement from the interviewer (this teacher-researcher), had an empowering effect upon these students. Through success in stages of the writing process, initially insecure students became self-confident, or at least more self-confident, through the metacognitive process. In the final interview, participants were asked if their writing had improved over the semester. If they felt it had, they were asked to elaborate by delineating the areas in which it had improved. When asked about her improvement on the preinterview assignment in preparation for the final interview, Isabel displayed self-confidence

that was based on a realistic positive self-assessment as she carefully delineated her strengths:

> My writing improved in the following areas: first, is the organization, because now I know how to write my ideas in different paragraphs; second is my grammar and vocabulary because throughout this semester I been learning new grammar skills; and the third one is the process that I learned in writing because [by] using this process [it] is more easy to write my ideas or to improve my topic.

Another participant with relatively low proficiency began to self-evaluate herself in a more empowering manner as she reflected on her writing progress:

> I.: What are you able to do?
>
> Rita: I'm able to write better the words. . .write some better. I know how to write better English so now I can write better.
>
> I.: One of your strengths is that you have improved. Okay, what else can you do?
>
> Rita: Automatic writing.
>
> I.: What else?
>
> Rita: . . .when you make a circle and you put in the center what you want to write about and then you take a lot of topics about that and then you write all around it of the circle.
>
> I.: We call that "mapping." . . .So you're saying that mapping is something that you can do better?
>
> Rita: I can do a lot better than before because when you first told us abut mapping, I didn't know where to start. Then you told me how to do it, and now I can do it better.
>
> I.: Okay, one of the things you know how to do is a mapping. Since you know how to do this, how will you use this to continue to improve in writing?

Rita: . . .Well, I will use it because. . .for. . .every time I try to write something and I don't know exactly what I'm going to write and then I just make a map. Then if I'm going to write on my daughter. . .I can write around what is, what she do or whatever I can think of then after I do that then I could take make a list down then I can do things like "a". . ."b." What do you call that?

I: Outline.

Rita: Outline. Then I put everything together. Like everything that goes together.

I.: Right. Okay, when you're not sure what you're going to write, you're going to use the mapping to brainstorm.

Rita: Yes, then I make the outline. Then I write from the outline what goes first, what goes second. Then like that and then I can make [a] paragraph.

In the above dialogue, Rita illustrated the empowering effect reflection and subsequent realization of her strengths and progress in writing had in relation to the work for ESL Writing Class. However, more significant for Rita was her empowering realization of her progress and effect on her writing outside of class. Because of the recommendation that Rita repeat ESL Writing Class, an "objective" or "standardized" assessment of Rita's writing might be unsatisfactory; however, Rita's success could be measured in terms of the personal empowerment learning to write had given her. The following dialogue during the third conference or interview poignantly illustrated Rita's transformation from someone who for years had relied on her

children to write notes to their teachers to a writer confident or empowered enough to "do" it herself:

I.: Has your writing improved over this semester? How has it improved?

Rita: I started writing more. Different. . .new words.

I.: Any other ways that your writing improved?

Rita. Ya. No, that's it.

I.: When we were talking once before you said you wouldn't write a note to the teacher and now you would.

Rita: Ya.

I.: Is that just because you have more words?

Rita: Yes, because I feel that I have more confidence. Before when I was supposed to write a note to my son's teacher, I used to tell him go ahead and do the note and I'll sign it. Now, I write the note and I signed it too.

. . .When I started school, I started to write letters for school [for my children].

I.: When you go to write a letter for school before and now do you do anything differently? Did you read it over before?

Rita.: The only different thing is I write the words more clearly. Before I was afraid. I didn't have confidence in myself. I was afraid. I didn't let my son take it to school. Every time I started a letter, I rip it up because I said I'm not doing it right.

I.: Do you rip it up now?

Rita: No, now I do it and I give it to her [her daughter]--to him [her son].

I.: Well, that's pretty different.

> Rita: Ya, I used to say you're going to write the letter and I'll sign it for you. Because I don't know the words. Now I'm doing it.

As they reflected on their writing improvement spontaneously throughout the semester, Marisa and Elizabeth, who had satisfactory proficiency in writing, began to evaluate themselves in an empowering way. In a journal around midterm, Marisa very humbly commented about work for the writing class. In this comment, she reflected on her present ability to accomplish so much in writing because of the practice ESL Writing Class had afforded her:

> People used to complain about the homework. At first I was thinking the same way. But now at[as] the time goes by I have been thinking and to me I was wrong. Because if you didn't give me all that work, I won't be writing this much today. I know I don't write too good, but--since I started writing--I noticed I have been improving little by little. . .

Halfway through the semester, Elizabeth reflected that ESL Writing Class had been her first experience with composition: "I've never made a real writing before, but now I either can make an automatic writing or a free writing." Her growing empowering self-evaluation was also evident in the following excerpt of her reflections about the power realized through recording an experience in writing:

> If you're on a trip and you see some amazing things you might like to share with friends and relatives, you just take a piece of paper and start writing so you won't forget a thing.

When Elena, another student with satisfactory proficiency in writing, reflected about her writing

strengths, she also became aware of her personal strengths. As she read over her assignments in order to evaluate herself, she also realized writing about the topic "responsibility" had given her the opportunity to grow in responsibility. Her discussion of how writing had created positive change in her life and the lives of family members displayed empowerment through "conscientization" (Freire 1981). In her response, she used empowering terms such as "strength" and "power":

> Elena: That paper give me headache because I know what I mean responsibility. When I wrote that one I know now what I mean responsibility. I didn't know about I wrote that one I couldn't finish, but I wrote that one. I'm glad to write that one, 'cause I know now I have take a lot of responsibility.
>
> . . .Now I want to be more responsible to get in a family and also when I told my sister I tell her that one. She say, " Oh, that's good, Elena. We try out now to be together. Be responsible.
>
> I.: So it got you thinking about what it was to be responsible?
>
> Elena: Ya. Also for my brother too. My brother the first time when I ask him I took him because I know he not responsible. He say you made me see about that responsible. I choose you for that reason I know you are not responsible. You left your family alone and you go with your friends, and he told me he will change. I was glad too. He will look for a job. Before he not looking for a job. Now he look for a job. He will be responsible in his house. That paper do a lot of things.
>
> I.: It's interesting 'cause it makes me think 'cause this is the part of the course I've been thinking about. There's this man [Paulo Freire 1981, 1982]. He's from. . .where's he from? He's from Brazil and he's educated. He's a professor.

He has gone all over the world teaching people. What he teaches people is how to read, but he's very political so he doesn't just want to teach people how to read. He feels by teaching people how to read he can give them more power--personal power. You know, through reading they will start thinking about these words and he starts with words that they need every day and he tries to use words that are very important to them. He wants them to think about themselves and how they think about the world around them. He doesn't just teach reading. He's trying to teach a way of people strengthening themselves through understanding. I guess that's what I understand.

Elena: Hmhmmm.

I.: And so I'm really influenced by this teacher. You know, he's very. . .when you hear him, he's very quiet. He's a philosopher. He talks in circles. He makes you think. You have to think a lot.

Elena: Ya, I get surprised too, because I always do everything and I never think about what I'm doing and when you start to write everything think about what you know I was glad about that because now I can think strength I have in myself. Also was glad to take that project to ask my brother and my family about responsibility. It change a lot.

I.: . . .Think of one thing we did. . .you did. . .in class . . .at home. . .whatever. . .that really helped you the most.

Elena: Writing, writing. . .the paper narrative and responsibility and other papers [narrative and definition of an abstract term papers]. That helped me a lot. That helped me to understand that I know how to write in English. I know I have the power to write in English because before I couldn't believe. . .didn't believe. . .that I can write.

I.: You mean just doing it. . .,just the fact of having to write. . .practicing.

Elena: Yes, practicing and doing.

By midterm, Soku, the student with the highest proficiency in writing, began to see his improvement even though he thought he still had much work to do:

> When I began to write something in English, I didn't know how to start it and which word do I use. But, now, I make a little improvement on writing. . . .I'm sure that I've achieved something. But I still have lots of questions.

Soku used writing to reflect on his thoughts and feelings about himself as a L2 learner and writer. As he evaluated himself, through his writing he seemed to gain power over the insecurity he had continually struggled with. For example, in a journal response at the end of the semester, Soku seemed to be empowered by the sun's example of "greatness." The sun has never allowed anything to "discourage" it from its work:

> I like sun because it gives me a lot of meanings. I experience some miracle from sunrise and sunset. When ever I see the sunrise, my mind get excited and filled with energy. I also see the most beautiful pictures from sunset. I don't know very much the scientific functions of sun, but I know sun gives all kinds of energies. Because of the sun, we can see, play, even live. Most people don't realize the important of sun. If the sun disappeared, how people could live and what would happen?
>
> But I want to write some different meaning of the sun. Yesterday, I got a Christmas card from my father. He told me "never [be] discouraged when you have bad experiences. Think about the greatness of the sun. It's never gone away and gives us energy at the cost of himself. You have to be warm and ambitious just like the sun."
>
> . . .How many time have I been discouraged so far? I am very ashamed of myself. I am never going to be discouraged in spite of any difficulty.

In his written response to improvement he saw in his own writing at the time of the third interview, Soku acknowledged particular steps in the writing process he had accomplished, remarking on his confidence in developing his writing skill "through these steps," as cited in the above subsection that described participants' specific evaluations of themselves. When completing a homework assignment the last week of class, Soku voluntarily chose to reflect on writing class. He thought about his progress which did not meet his high standards, but he consoled himself with confidence in his future improvement. This certainty about future progress was empowering. In his reflections about a motto he had seen in a classroom, Soku used this writing to practice "self-support" or bolstering of his confidence:

> The end of my first semester at [City Community College] is coming pretty soon. When I compare my English with the beginning, I can see lots of improvement. First of all, I can write something in English even though it is incomplete grammatically. . . .Sometimes I get disappointed to myself, but I always try to be thankful for everything. The motto written at the classroom, "leap over the wall of yourself" is very impressive to me. Although I can't achieve many things right now, sometime I can see my progress and will be proud of myself.

Discussion of Self-Direction (Self-Evaluation and Planning)

Adults, who had already experienced self-direction and independence for many years in their lives outside of the area of academics learned to become more self-directed and

independent when learning to write. The interviewing language and techniques reflected an openness to the individuality of each student and a predisposition to search for and acknowledge a writing strength present in any part of the participant's writing process, no matter what level of writing achievement was exhibited in the writing products (the workshop papers completed at the time of the interview).

With guidance from the teacher-researcher during mini-conferences in class and interviews or conferences outside of class, self-direction developed in stages for most participants. Student-participants learned how to acknowledge their strengths while realizing their needs, and they developed the ability to make specific, realistic plans. Many student-participants moved from a global negativity about themselves and writing to a realistic conception of their strengths and needs, which opened the possibility for concrete planning or pragmatic learning strategies. Self-awareness particular to writing (metacognition) enabled students to take charge of, or actively participate in, their learning, thereby creating an empowering learning situation for themselves.

Summary of the Findings

Observations about metacognition in one adult ESL, community college writing class were possible through the

participatory research approach of this study. Student-participants revealed their reflections on three metacognitive topics: attitude towards writing, descriptions of themselves as writers (writing identity), and self-direction (self-evaluation and planning).

This findings of this study were based on the experiences of one Level 3 class of adult community college ESL students learning to write. All questions were asked in an open-ended way in order to explore all the possibilities that this group of participants might present during interviews. One reservation about the findings of this study might be that participants tended to answer in ways that they perceived most acceptable to the questioner. However, to avoid this possibility all questions were phrased in various ways a number of times throughout the semester and were responded to both orally in interviews and in writing through automatic writings, freewritings, mappings, and short essay answers. Besides that, participants were continually reminded that responses could be neither right nor wrong and no particular "answer" was being sought. Instead, it was emphasized that any opinions and feelings expressed were valid responses. Responses that might illustrate that these participants did not confine themselves to answers they considered "acceptable" were responses that expressed feelings of anger, nervousness, and lack of confidence. In addition, one technique used to

gather data that offered a relatively uninhibited response was "automatic writing" since ideas and feelings racing through the respondent's mind seemed to appear on the page with little or no monitoring or editing. In fact, it appeared that the diversity and nuances in feeling, motivations, writing identities, and self-direction displayed in the oral and written responses did reflect the consciously perceived feelings and opinions of these participants rather than some idea of what might be an "acceptable" response.

Reflections on attitude towards writing revealed themes related to both feelings (or emotions) and motivations. Responses from participants about feelings were categorized into the following groups according to overall attitude and changes throughout the semester: most positive feelings, mixed feelings, most negative feelings, and most marked change in attitude. The findings were that overall feelings towards writing that were articulated were multifaceted and changed throughout the semester for most participants. Positive feelings may have stemmed from a feeling of accomplishment, and students seemed energized by positive feelings.

It seemed that negative feelings were related to lack of confidence and positive feelings were related to growing self-confidence. However, these feelings were unrelated to the level of proficiency of an individual writer, but seemed

related to an individual participant's achievement in relation to his/her own progress. In other words, student-participants' feelings were based on individual perceptions of success, which were linked to an individual's progress rather than an outside measure of achievement or comparison with classmates.

The surfacing of feelings for continual reflection may have given students the opportunity to observe themselves, question their feelings or emotions, and allow them to soften or change once expressed. Oral and written reflections about their attitude may have served as positive reminders which helped them persist through those frustrating moments common to most writers' experience but perhaps more frustrating to a writer in his/her Second Language. The process of reflection itself may have been "enabling" for these participants. Also, the process approach to writing allowed revisions in manageable steps or stages. These revisions were based on observations or reflections by the teacher and the students themselves. As participants realized a measure of success in any particular step in their writing process, their positive feelings seemed to increase.

However, the feelings of a student such as Soku with very high self-expectations became more positive with perceived progress, but remained mixed throughout the semester. Those students with limited proficiency (marked

by difficulty with writing as well as oral comprehension and/or production) such as Juanita and Bae were energized by the positive feelings generated by success in expression of their ideas during the idea generation stage (automatic writing, freewriting, and mapping, for example). The sheer frustration of attempting to write standard written prose, however, meant negative feelings tended to surface more often for students with a lower proficiency in comparison to others in ESL Writing Class. Negative feelings such as anger, exhaustion, boredom, and anxiety surfaced in their reflections.

On the other hand, a student like Juanita (who felt uncertain about writing in English to the point of it creating an exhausting feeling for her) experienced the positive feeling of exhilaration--an emotion she described as feeling "fantastic" -- when she succeeded in producing writing in English understandable to others. In contrast, a student like Rita who began with an intense dislike of writing, may not have experienced such positive feelings with success in steps of the writing process as did Juanita and Bae who at an early stage acknowledged feelings of enjoyment about writing. However, the feelings may have become sufficiently less negative to enable such a student to complete assignments with greater ease than previously.

Though it has been speculated above that positive emotions and self-confidence went hand-in-hand, students may

have also experienced positive emotions due to their individual orientations that motivated them to want to learn. These personal reasons (or motivations for wanting to learn) were spontaneously reported in response to the question about attitude towards writing.

As student-participants reflected on attitude, they spontaneously included their motivations for learning to write. The surfacing of motivations when reflecting may have increased students' awareness of their own reasons for learning to write. The reasons participants cited regarding motivation to learn involved both external and internal orientations towards motivations. The external orientations included the following thematic categories: job or career advancement, academic success, survival skills, and communicative interaction with native-speakers. Internal orientations included the following thematic categories: expression of feelings, joy in self-expression, general self-improvement, and expansion of thinking ability or cognition.

Motivations did not appear to be either-or propositions for any individual writer, but as multifaceted as the feelings or emotions discussed above. For example, Soku was one highly motivated writer who expressed myriad orientations (external and internal) throughout the semester. Mentioned by him were external orientations such as advancement of a career, attainment of academic success,

improvement of survival skills, and personal and professional interaction with native speakers as well as the internal orientation of expansion of thinking ability or cognition.

One writer who had many negative feelings about writing, Rita, expressed strong external orientations of job advancement and improved survival skills. Her motivations could be construed as "instrumental" or practical; however, for Rita, a single mother living on a limited income, these practical, external orientations may have kept her persisting even though her attitude in terms of feelings was primarily negative.

Internal orientations that participants cited were expression of feelings, a joy in self-expression, general self-improvement, and expanded thinking ability or cognition. Interestingly, for the least proficient, internal orientations seemed to be linked with persistence in the face of extreme obstacles due to their limited proficiency. Unfortunately, these students did not have sufficient proficiency or did not progress sufficiently to realistically project orientations towards immediate advancement in the areas of occupation and academic achievement. Improved survival skills may have been perceived as a probable result, however. Strong internal desires for expression of feelings and general self-improvement created an intensity of motivation for a student

like Bae that was manifested as dogged persistence, even though her only indicator of reward for her valiant efforts was her individual progress.

The findings about writing identity were categorized under headings related to the beginning, middle, and end of the semester since thematic differences that were found were related to participants' writing experiences at these respective times: preliminary descriptions, indirect descriptions at mid-term, and final descriptions. The findings regarding writing identity indicated most participants began with little or no ability to describe themselves as writers. Those initial findings could have been due to the wording of the question, or perhaps more assertiveness and/or proficiency in English were/was needed to respond to such a question. More likely, a sense of writing identity was virtually nonexistent since most participants had little or no previous experience in written composition in an academic setting.

Participants' sense of writing identity grew with experience in writing and practice in thinking of themselves as writers. By midterm, their concepts as writers seemed to be integrally related to their experiences that semester as writers and students. Consequently, their descriptions referred to general qualities any successful student might possess and accomplishments of steps of the writing process they had experienced in ESL Writing Class.

By the end of the semester, with more experience writing and thinking of themselves as writers, their definitions of themselves as writers expanded. In contrast to confusion and incredulity at the thought of seeing oneself as a writer (or discussing this concept), each student's writing identity became clearer to him/herself by the end of the semester. Descriptions of writing identity were no longer confined to accomplishments of steps of the writing process outlined in the syllabus of ESL Writing Class. While the less proficient students' concepts expanded to an awareness of capabilities of greater achievement in various steps of the writing process, the more proficient students' concepts expanded to include more characteristics and qualities of writers than presented at midterm or at the start of the semester. For a few student-participants the definition of personal writing identity expanded to include a more sophisticated concept that included audience awareness and writing voice or tone.

Reflection on writing identity did not occur in isolation; that is, this topic occurred within the context of a writing class and a research approach that was participatory and focused on reflections of themselves as writers in various other ways (attitude and self-direction) and within the context of a writing methodology that emphasized revision that entailed constant reflection on one's writing.

Before providing a context for discussion of the findings regarding self-direction (self-evaluation and planning), a description of the interviewing language was necessary. In order to encourage participants, the following interviewing techniques were used: categorization of writing strengths, acknowledgement of a stated strength, reinforcement, positive thinking, and pragmatic approach. In order to elicit more response from participants, the following techniques were used: repetition (paraphrasing and restating the question) and itemization of the writing process.

The findings regarding self-direction revealed the following themes: inability to evaluate positively, global (or very general) evaluation, specific evaluation, global (or very general) planning, specific planning, and empowering evaluation. The findings regarding reflection on self-direction revealed that students could articulate with little or no self-direction initially. Generally, early self-direction and planning took the form of global evaluations and planning. After reflecting on this topic in dialogue with this teacher researcher, students moved to more specific evaluations and planning by midterm. By the end of the semester, students' reflections had become more specific regarding both evaluation and planning and, for some, reflections served to empower.

Since it was found that most students felt insecure or lacked self-confidence for various reasons, an interviewing format was designed to utilize language of "encouragement" and "elicitation." Based on participants' responses throughout the semester, reasons for lack of self-confidence appeared to be high expectations or goals, difficulty with English itself, inadequate academic preparation, and/or previous negative experiences with school. Consequently, during interviews emphasis was always on strengths first, for example, and various interviewing techniques were used for encouragement and elicitation. Those participants whose responses reflected a need for encouragement were encouraged (through the use of the interviewing techniques reported above) to acknowledge any strength or strengths in the dialogue with the interviewer. Besides encouraging language, eliciting language was utilized as reported above to remind participants of the full range of choices with which to evaluate themselves.

As was stated previously, it was found that there was a movement from global to specific evaluations and planning from the start to the end of the semester. Also, reflections on self-direction moved from an inability to positively self-evaluate (disempowering) to empowering evaluations. As with the difficulty in describing themselves as writers, a similar inability or difficulty existed regarding evaluation of strengths. Needs were

readily acknowledged at these early stages; however, needs were expressed in ways too global to be acted upon. For example, a need to learn more English was cited without specifying particular writing or language needs.

Thus, encouragement and elicitation during interviews served as an educational "intervention" (Wenden 1983) in self-direction. The dialectic process during the interviews served as a vehicle for change as well as a way to probe for data in this participatory research study. Rather than the interviewer directly itemizing strengths, needs, and plans for the student-participants, probing statements and questions were posed allowing for open-ended evaluations and planning by these student-participants, who were guided towards self-direction during these dialogues.

When asked about strengths, the tendency of these participants was to state what they could not do. One student, Rita, went to the extreme of stating that she could do "nothing", even though at that time she had already practiced steps in the writing process and had written numerous automatic and freewritings as well as drafted and revised an essay of more than one paragraph. Students often answered in global ways. An example of this was Bae who responded that her needs were "writing and reading." By the second interview, student-participants had become more specific. For example, by then Bae was able to acknowledge that one strength she possessed was the ability to

accomplish "automatic writing." By mid-term and the second interview, a more proficient writer, Soku, was able to enumerate his strengths by citing the numerous steps he had accomplished such as automatic writing, mapping, freewriting, outlining, organizing, and revising.

Another finding was that participants responded with another problematic type of self-direction: global planning. Before dialogue during the interviews, the plans that participants mentioned tended to be general--too general to carry out. Through dialogue, the student-participants unfolded more specific plans. One example of a participant who developed more specific planning through dialogue was Bae, who decided to observe something real as a stimulus to writing journal homework and utilize automatic writing more often to get herself started, a point in writing she had found difficult.

Another participant, Elena, had no difficulty getting started. On the contrary, her greatest need was in narrowing her topic to reduce the prolific amount of writing she produced and in organizing it effectively. By mid-term, she had formulated a specific plan to reflect on a tentative organization before she began automatic writing or freewriting, which would probably help her move more quickly through the drafting process to a final paper than the method of organizing afterwards that had been practiced in ESL Writing Class.

In comparison to reflections early in the semester and at mid-term, evaluations at the end of the semester were generally more empowering for these participants. Rita had moved from a writer who could do "nothing" to one who could at least acknowledge her strength in automatic writing without further encouragement. With minimal encouragement or elicitation, Rita acknowledged her ability to map, and outline. More empowering in a pragmatic sense was Rita's realization that she now had enough self-confidence to write a note to her children's teachers without her previous habit of deciding it was an impossible task, ripping it up, and asking one of her children to write it for her. For Rita, who had spoken of how learning English could make her more independent, increased self-confidence meant personal empowerment.

Reflecting on the experience of writing somehow seemed to make the experience expand for these writers. Elizabeth reflected that she "had never made real a writing before" but now she could record memorable experiences while traveling. This enabled her to share experiences without having to rely solely on memory. This example that Elizabeth gave as a future use of writing illustrated her personal realization of the power of literacy, an empowering realization. When Elena reflected on "responsibility" for one of her writing assignments, she discussed the concept with people close to her. For Elena and her family, this

reflection meant actual changes in their lives. The "words" reflected the real "world" (Freire 1981) and her world was potentially transformed through the action-reflection-action dynamic or "praxis" (Freire 1981) stimulated by reflection of her writing. From an insecure student-participant who, during the first interview, tearfully related an experience of getting lost and let off the bus miles from her destination because of her "poor English," Elena became self-confident about both speaking and writing in English.. By the final interview, she was certain she would "move over there" to become "excellent." Not only had she realized her strengths and discovered how to plan about her writing in a practical way, she had moved beyond this to reflect upon the ideas expressed in her writing, creating an expansion of self-direction beyond learning L2.

Through encouragement of reflection and the practice of self-reflection particular to writing, self-awareness increased in all metacognitive areas explored in this study. This metacognitive awareness enabled students to actively participate in their educational experience, which enabled them to "take charge" of their learning situation.

Chapter VI

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This section of the dissertation will speculate on the implications of the findings and conclude the report of this exploratory study in metacognition with one ESL writing class of adult, community college students. Conclusions within this chapter have been drawn from the findings regarding the three metacognitive topics explored: attitude towards writing, writing identity, and self-direction. In keeping with the student-centered orientation of this study and its emphasis on self-directed learning, some implications have been drawn from student-participants' responses during the final interview to direct inquiry about the metacognitive approach and the writing curriculum that they had experienced.

Implications and conclusions will be discussed in this section under the following subheadings:

Attitude towards Writing
Writing Identity
Self-Direction
Research Implications
Curriculum Suggestions
Metacognitive Approach (Student-Participants' Report)
Concluding Statements

Attitude Towards Writing

This study reported on findings about retrospective accounts of ESL students' feelings about writing in general rather than general ESL learning (Wenden 1982) or L1 students' feelings while writing (Brand & Powell 1986). In this study, responses to questions about attitude included feelings or emotions about writing as well as motivational orientations towards learning to write. In their research on emotion during the writing process of L1 college writers, Brand and Powell (1986) found that students experienced both negative and positive emotions while writing as did this study. In both studies, positive emotions seemed to enable or energize student writers. Brand and Powell's speculations that were confirmed with this research population were that writers who "consider themselves skilled become more readily engaged in composing and thus experience decreasing boredom and confusion as they move through the process" (p. 283).

Differences in findings may have reflected the subtle difference in which emotions were studied--those emotions students had <u>while</u> writing (Brand & Powell 1986) or those emotions students had <u>about</u> writing (the present study). One difference in the findings was that in Brand and Powell's study skilled writers experienced more positive emotions than unskilled writers, while in this study positive emotions seemed unrelated to proficiency or an

outside measure of skill in writing. Contrary to expectations, student-participants with very limited proficiency reported very positive feelings about writing as well as the anticipated negative feelings. Positive feelings seemed related to student-participants' perception of their own writing skills. That is, they seemed to perceive themselves as skilled in the sense of personal progress rather than skilled in comparison to an objective or subjective assessment of other classmates' proficiencies.

In respect to positive emotions and assessment of ability, Brand and Powell found that students' perceptions of themselves as skilled or unskilled were more personally meaningful than others' assessments of their abilities. This study confirmed this finding with one group of ESL learners, in that these ESL learners' perceptions of themselves as skilled writers were more meaningful in relation to the emotions reported also. However, here, the criterion for a personal assessment of skilled or unskilled was progress rather than proficiency.

One question Brand and Powell had suggested for future research was how particular "affects" could be "recruited for effective writing performance" (1986, p. 284). The findings about the least proficient writers discussed above tentatively suggest that a writing class that encourages individual acknowledgement of strengths and focuses on progress in a noncompetitive workshop environment such as

student-participants experienced within this study might "recruit" positive emotions about writing. Positive emotions probably enable writers to become more readily engaged in the process (Brand & Powell 1986), and greater engagement in the process means more experience with writing while learning to write. It has been suggested that experience in writing itself is more effective than learning about writing or about parts of writing (F. Smith 1982b, Krashen 1984, Moran 1983-1984, Gourley 1983, Gourley et al 1983). The implication, then, is that recruitment of positive emotions through practice in writing, encouragement, and metacognitive awareness of both abilities and progress could enlist more effective writing from ESL learners.

When students are allowed to express emotions orally and in writing, they are given opportunities for self-observation and dialogue with others. Continual personal reflection allows acknowledgement of what emotion is enabling and/or allows potential change of that which is disabling.

In this study, student-participants responded to open-ended questioning about attitude, which resulted in responses both similar to and different from those reported in the literature on motivation and L2 learning (Gardner & Lambert 1959, 1972, Gardner 1985, Oller 1981). When participants were asked to reflect on their attitudes, the

intention was to elicit information on feelings. The exact wording used was the following: "What is your attitude towards writing? How do you feel about writing?" Thus, reflections on motivation were not directly requested; however, it was found that feelings and motivations were integrally related since participants spontaneously reported their reasons for learning to write while reflecting on their feelings.

Some of their responses fit into motivational categories discussed in earlier L2 literature (Gardner and Lambert 1959, 1972, Gardner 1985) such as a desire to "integrate" with the target culture expressed in this study as a desire for communicative interaction with native speakers as well as an "instrumental" desire reported in this study as a desire for career advancement, academic advancement, and/or improvement of survival skills.

The "internal" desire (Knowles 1984) of general self-improvement was cited by these participants also. In addition, this study, which focused on learning to write in L2, found that student-participants were also motivated by "internal" desires relevant to writing such as desires for expression of feelings, experiencing joy in self-expression, and expansion of their thinking ability (cognition) through writing.

Since participants who expressed motivational orientations cited more than one orientation and differed in

the orientations they reported, Oller's speculation that motives would vary considerably across "individuals, contexts, and learning tasks and that different motives are not "mutually exclusive" (1981, p. 15) was also confirmed here.

In the literature on motivation (Gardner & Lambert 1972), it has been suggested that a minority population learning L2 within the target culture might be more motivated by utilitarian reasons than "integrative" ones. Factors that characterize the majority of this ESL research population as "minority" rather than "foreign" students are the following: they belonged to both Hispanic and Korean cultures within the larger U.S. culture, spoke L1 at home, experienced difficult financial situations, had lived in the U.S. an average of ten years (with a range from one month to twenty six years), and all but one participant planned to continue living in the mainland U.S. upon completion of their academic studies. (See Chapter IV, "Description of the Research Population," for a full description of these participants.) The report of these participants who could be characterized as primarily "minority" confirmed this utilitarian orientation for learning L2. The utilitarian or "instrumental" orientation seemed to be the primary motive for enrolling in an ESL program initially; however, as the semester progressed, other factors surfaced in relation to motivations for learning to write in L2.

Both the participatory and metacognitive approaches of this study allowed surfacing of motivations and time for reflecting orally and in writing. It is possible that "attitude and motivation can be ameliorated so as to enhance second language learning" (Schumann 1980). Attention to motivations (as well as feelings) may have increased students' awareness of their own motivational (and emotional) orientations which could have served to encourage persistence in writing in the face of obstacles that any student writer occasionally faces, but that due to linguistic constraints, most ESL writers experience with greater frequency and intensity than most L1 writers.

Writing Identity

The ideas and techniques reported by Solsken (Gourley 1983, Gourley et al 1983) were adapted and modified for use with adults learning to write in ESL in this present study. In this study, development of a writing identity through experience writing, through acknowledgement by an instructor, and through reflections when describing a writer's qualities or characteristics allowed an ESL student to move from a static to a dynamic definition of him/herself--from an identity of a nonwriter to one of an evolving writer who would continue to improve.

Techniques suitable to adult learners were used that were similar in effect to those used with fledgling young

writers to enable them to write almost immediately. Thus, modifications for adult writers contribute to the research related to writing identity (Gourley et al 1983). Rather than the use of "invented spelling" per se, these ESL writers were permitted to write in both "automatic" and "freewriting" styles which meant errors in spelling as well as vocabulary, sentence construction, and overall organization were acceptable in the early drafting process.

Just as Solsken's (Gourley et al 1983) young writers experienced and practiced writing as a way of learning to write, constant and plentiful experience in writing was offered to these adults throughout one semester. Just as young writers informally "published" individual books in Gourley's study, writing by these adult writers was "published" in class booklets. Rather than implicit and explicit acknowledgement of young students as writers through the practice of an "authors' circle" where young authors reported on their books to a small group of peers, acknowledgement of these adults as writers came through the following means: publishing of their work in class booklets as mentioned above, compilation of writing portfolios which contained all of their writing assignments including homework and all process work and final drafts done in the workshop, direct and indirect oral and written requests of

descriptions of them as writers, response to peers as writers through written feedback to each other's published work.

Since a sense of writing identity probably developed for this research population through the reflections of each topic explored and through the totality of experiences as writers, it is difficult to assess the causal relationship between reflecting on writing identity and encouragement of an awareness of writing identity. However, it appeared that such reflection did contribute in some measure to the development of such a concept for these fledgling adult writers, since they changed from incredulity or denial of themselves as writers to a distinct sense of writing identity from the beginning to the end of one semester's experience with writing.

Self-Direction

This study reported on findings regarding self-direction of adults when learning to write in ESL, specifically in the areas of self-evaluation and planning, rather than self-direction in general adult learning (Knowles 1975), general ESL learning (Wenden 1982), or L1 writing instruction (McCarthy et al 1985). In this study, self-evaluation included self-assessment of writing

"strengths" and "needs" (Rudman 1982, Gambrell & Wilson 1973), and student-participants' planning included steps to take to capitalize upon strengths or improve in writing needs.

McCarthy, Meier, and Rinderer (1985) suggested that negative self-evaluations might limit the alternatives attempted when writing while positive self-evaluations might increase the willingness to attempt different alternatives when writing as well as strengthen student writers' persistence. The findings of this present study, however, indicated that the significant aspect regarding self-evaluation and performance was the specificity of evaluations--whether positive or negative. For example, negative self-evaluations expressed in very general terms ("global evaluations") indicated an inability or powerlessness to change the situation while increased specificity in even negative self-evaluations indicated greater potential to change the situation through concrete planning for improvement. The implications of an ability to specifically plan were the potential for positive change, a feeling of empowerment (Freire 1985a, 1985b), and control over one's own learning (Freire 1981, 1985b, Knowles 1975, 1984, Thomas & Harri-Augstein 1977).

Similarly, positive evaluations followed by overly general planning ("global planning") seemed to imply less self-awareness of potential power to capitalize upon

strengths possessed in writing. Since a student with specific plans for future use of strengths and improvement of needs would have "tools" that would permit him/her to feel more self-confident about writing and, consequently, less anxious, the implication is that self-evaluation and planning by students themselves can serve to empower. If this personal sense of empowerment provides writers with a more positive self-evaluation of their writing, then this study confirms the relationship between self-evaluation and performance or quality of written products that McCarthy, Meier, and Rinderer (1985) suggested in their work with L1 writers.

The findings of this study confirmed the link between self-evaluation and performance with the reservation that the relationship is complex. According to McCarthy, Meier, and Rinderer, the link is recursive or dynamic and bidirectional rather than a simple causal link. The findings of this study also confirmed the suggestion that, when "performance improves, belief in one's abilities increases" and, "when belief increases, performance improves" (McCarthy et al 1985, p. 466). Thus, this study contributes research that offers some insight into "how one's thinking about one's writing affects one's ability to produce good writing" (McCarthy et al 1985, p. 470), since in this present study, a willingness to attempt alternatives in writing and persistence "in the face of obstacles" was positively

related to ESL writers' self-evaluations of themselves and their capabilities. In addition, this present study offered a model for implementation of self-direction (Wenden 1982) in an ESL writing curriculum, so students could take "charge of their own writing" (McCarthy et al 1985).

Research Implications

Since this research study was conducted with one ESL writing class during one semester, the implications and conclusions may extend to other ESL populations learning to write or may be limited to this particular research population. In order to discover the validity of the findings for other ESL populations, replication of this study with ESL populations both similar and dissimilar in basic information and characteristics is suggested. (See Chapter IV, "ESL Population," for a complete description of this research population.) Other research directions suggested include separate participatory research on each of the three topics covered here, which would allow more in-depth observation and analysis of each topic. In addition, the student-participants' in-depth reflections on each topic could be used as a basis for the development of questionnaires to facilitate implementation of quantitative studies on each topic with much larger research populations. These studies could also extend over a longer period of time.

One possible separate research topic would be the role of affect in writing in ESL. A separate study devoted to the topic of feelings or emotions in relation to writing would permit "serious research" on a relatively neglected topic (Brand 1987a). According to L1 writing researcher and instructor, Alice Brand (1987a), the study of the impact of emotions could aid in understanding writing problems and how to alleviate them for students:

> Examining the impact of the emotions on writing may also help us understand why some problems occur during writing and how we can solve them. For example, studying the affective involvement of professionals and people who write when they don't have to might help teachers work with students who do not write easily. Such students may be able to improve at a wide range of writing tasks if they can appreciate and recruit certain emotions at critical junctures in the process. (p. 441)

Furthermore, Brand suggested that the time had come to study the "why" of writing, "affective content and motivation," an implication of the findings of this present study also:

> Historically, the field of composition looked first at the what of writing, the product. Over the last two decades, it has added the how of writing, the process. It follows that the field look next at the why of writing, affective content and motivation. Understanding the corroboration of emotion and cognition in writing is both fundamental and far-reaching. It is in cognition that ideas make sense. But it is in emotion that this sense finds value. Without such priorities we could not think. The more comprehensive our understanding of the affective and cognitive content of discourse in any form, the more likely it will reflect their true interpenetration. (p. 442)

Suggestions for future research in respect to the particular topics covered within this study call for refinement in research design also. For example, oral and written metacognitive topics could be refined regarding methods of gathering data and specific metacognitive topics emphasized. Also, assignments about metacognition could be simplified. An example of a refinement in research design regarding the metacognitive topic of writing identity would be to present participants with an initial questionnaire that listed positive qualities or characteristics of a writer that were generated by that particular group's brainstorming and mapping early in the semester. A mapping of this brainstorming could be given in preparation for the first interview, which would give students time to reflect before coming to the interview and would also give them terminology that might be useful when reflecting about writing. Students would gain appropriate terminology for qualities and characteristics that describe a writer and could reflect upon these qualities in relation to themselves. This would also give students an entire semester to reflect on the issue of writing identity in relation to themselves.

Refinement in research design regarding the topic of self-direction could be approached similarly to the topic of writing identity described above. Similar refinements include a class devoted to group brainstorming and mapping

along with an initial questionnaire in preparation for the first interview. These activities earlier in the semester would give student-participants appropriate terminology and time for reflection throughout the entire semester. Also, conferences on self-direction scheduled earlier and more often would give students experience in self-direction throughout the semester. For example, rather than conferences during the eighth and sixteenth weeks of a semester as in the present study, this topic could be discussed during the fourth, eighth, and sixteenth weeks, allowing time for students to put their plans into practice earlier in the semester.

One example of a possible simplification in an assignment regarding metacognition is a prepared questionnaire that would provide a framework to limit the number of possible responses. Using a questionnaire in preparation for an interview would limit the number of metacognitive topics discussed during one interview but could allow more time for in-depth probing of each topic. However, an open-ended component should be incorporated into any research design to allow for discovery of the diversity and creativity of responses that participants of any future research population might provide.

Curriculum Suggestions

In keeping with the student-centered orientation of this study, student-participants were asked about recommendations for future curriculum planning by asking them what "they would keep" and "what they would change about the course." Therefore, suggestions herein are based upon suggestions of the teacher-researcher and student-participants.

A curriculum model similar to the one utilized in this exploratory study is suggested by the findings described previously in Chapter V. It seems that modifications to the traditional writing curriculum could facilitate learning to write for ESL learners. A nontraditional writing curriculum that offered avenues for creative expression would be beneficial for advanced ESL learners. Variety in the types of writing such as poetry and letter writing might allow students to express their feelings and write from their motivational orientations (internal and external).

However, since the aim of many college and university ESL programs is to prepare students for mainstream course work, an ESL writing course is often designed to prepare students for the next level writing course. If future instructors expect the traditional paragraph and essay format of main idea sentences, expansion or elaboration in the body of a paragraph, and a conclusion (and, if they expect traditional types of discourse such as narration,

explanation, and definition), following a traditional curriculum may be the most efficient way to accomplish this goal. When this is the educational context, then the task implied is one of modifying the traditional curriculum to facilitate learning to write for ESL students.

Possible modifications include syllabus modifications used within this study as well as refinements in metacognitive topics discussed earlier in this subsection. Suggestions from student-participants for retention in the ESL Writing Class included the use of a draft-by-draft approach within a writing workshop that allows mini-conferences and practice writing in class throughout the semester. Based on their experiences, student-participants also recommended that prewriting techniques for idea generation be included in a writing workshop. A process approach to writing instruction that allows editing in stages with the early emphasis on elaboration and expansion of ideas and organization and later emphasis on sentence- and word-level needs gives ESL students an opportunity to capitalize upon existing knowledge--intellectual and linguistic. Also, most participants responded that they also would not change the writing workshop structure of the course since they had learned through the guidance and practice offered during each workshop.

In addition, idea-generation techniques such as automatic writing, freewriting, and mapping that enlist idea

generation in the form of oral and written brainstorming would encourage reticent or insecure writers to use what English they do know to express their ideas. To avoid the tendency of ESL students to approach writing as an exercise in grammar, early stages of writing that encourage expression of ideas without over concern for form are recommended. Group brainstorming in the ESL class as well as individual dialogue between the writing instructor and the student writer might encourage oral expression of ideas. Oral expression of ideas would encourage direct thinking in English rather than translation. This practice would generate a storehouse of practical vocabulary for each student. Written brainstorming techniques such as automatic writing and freewriting would encourage free expression of ideas without the inhibition presented by constant editing for form.

Considering the implications suggested in an earlier subsection regarding attitude, one relevant curricular suggestion is that opportunities for expression of attitude could be increased in an ESL writing class (and in a L1 writing class [Brand 1987a]). In this study, reflecting about attitude and motivations allowed students to express the affective. A writing class that follows a traditional syllabus in relation to types of paragraphs and essays does not generally give participants an opportunity to express themselves regarding the affective component or experience.

However, students might benefit from the opportunity to write in freewriting and automatic writing style about something very close to their writing experience: their own feelings and motivations. Unfortunately, feelings are often left out of the syllabus of a writing class preparatory to college writing (Brand 1987a) where the ability to express oneself rationally is the ostensible purpose of the course; however, feelings are part of the participants' experience and affect the writing class (Brand 1987a, Brand & Powell 1986), whether opportunity is given for their expression or not.

Inclusion of topics for writing assignments that capitalize on students' motivations and interests is recommended due to the findings of this study regarding motivational orientations. For example, for students motivated to learn to write because of career desires, writing an essay about a future career goal would allow expression of a topic close to their motivational interests.

Thinking and writing about abstract concepts are skills necessary for future academic success in college. Another curriculum suggestion is a writing assignment that combined interviewing native speakers about and reporting on abstract topics in order to encourage thinking in English about and writing on abstract concepts such as the essay assigned in ESL Writing Class on defining an abstract concept that interested each particular student. (For example, see

Chapter V, "Empowering Evaluation" for a report about this assignment by one student-participant, Elena.) Most ESL students need practice using language to discuss abstract concepts and also need practice communicating with native speakers about their ideas.

Metacognitive Approach (Student-Participants' Report)

In keeping with the student-centered and self-directed (Knowles 1975) orientations of this study, students were asked during final interviews whether reflection had made any difference in their learning experience. Analysis of their responses indicates that students' reflections of their thoughts and feelings had made a positive difference for them.

Open-ended wording of the question was used to reduce the possibility of influencing student-participants to respond either positively or negatively. For example, if the question had been phrased "Did reflecting help?," it might lead the participant to answer in terms of how reflecting had helped or not. In an attempt to avoid students anticipating any response they thought the researcher might expect from them, the question was phrased in a neutral manner by asking if having to respond to questions about themselves and writing "had made any difference." (See Appendix A "Summary of Conference 3" for a sample of the full wording of this question.)

All the students who attended the final interview responded that reflecting on the metacognitive topics had made a positive difference. Most students emphasized the educational benefit to themselves; however, one student emphasized the positive difference for the instructor (teacher-researcher). (See subsection entitled "Increased Awareness of Instructor" below.) From the viewpoints of the students themselves, the positive difference resulting from the metacognitive process could be categorized as follows:

Clarification
Opportunity for Verbal Expression
Time for Thinking and Understanding
Awareness of Progress through Comparison of Work
Increased Awareness of Instructor

Clarification

Clarification of the writing process through the opportunity to ask questions and receive immediate answers during the interviews could make a positive difference for students. One student in this study, Elba, expressed this view. In her response, she discussed how the interviews had provided opportunities for her not only to express her ideas more fully but also to ask questions which she would not otherwise have felt secure enough to ask:

> A difference, ya. It's hard to explain. I think that when you ask me a lot of questions I feel better, you know, because I'm trying to talking, to talk, to you and if you don't ask me, but I don't know what I'm doing I stay quiet. I'm not sure what I'm doing. I think that is better, you

know, the conference that you gave because we practice more and you have to use brainstorm fast, you know. . .Ya, I think [it] is much better.

Opportunity for Verbal Expression

The metacognitive process allowed students greater opportunity for verbal expression. Two students, Juanita and Rita, thought that reflecting about writing during the interview sessions allowed them to express themselves orally. It was their strong opinion that articulating orally had definitely helped. Juanita felt that the interviewing expanded on the language practice of the Writing Workshop. Furthermore, Juanita, who had been reticent about using English, reflected about writing and herself as a writer during the interviews, which gave her needed practice in expressing her ideas in English:

> Yes, different because you have to think [about] this question you have to do. More practice to [than] writing in class and when you give me these questions it help me a lot. . . .For me it change. It more help for me. . .Because you [k]now. . . you ask me the question and I explain [to] you.

Rita also thought that speaking during an interview stimulated her to think and figure out how better to express herself in English, while preparing written answers before coming to the interview did not:

> Well, I think there is a difference because you have to talk with somebody to get ideas and if you don't express yourself. . .just talking with somebody else. . .it's pretty hard for you or somebody else to know what the person wants or

> what the person learned to write or read because you have to express yourself and the other people know what you have learned or what you are about to learn. You have to speak. . . . [Speaking gives an opportunity for] a lot of expression, but if you're quiet nobody's going to understand.

Time for Thinking and Understanding

Oral and written reflections could make a positive difference for students by giving them time to think and come to a better understanding of themselves as writers. Incorporating metacognitive assignments into an ESL writing class would allow time within the structure of the course for thinking, an essential part of any writing process. Students would have the chance to compare their abilities from the beginning to the end of one semester. Such careful assessment of their abilities (strengths and needs) might aid them in self-direction and planning.

As one student, Isabel, remarked, "Maybe I don't spend the time that I spent now. When I was writing the answers, I spend more time thinking." Another student, Marisa, reported that having to write down reflections helped her understand herself and her writing abilities better:

> It gave me more understanding--writing it--of the things I have done and what the things [are that] I'm going to do.

Elena indicated that she ordinarily would not have taken the time to think about what she had done, but that

she had been pleasantly surprised by her progress when she had taken the time to reflect:

> I get surprised too, because I always do everything and I never think about what I'm doing and when you start to write everything think about what you know I was glad about that because now I can think strength I have in myself.
>
> . . .I get surprised to say I'm good now. Like I say I fail [in the second interview] and now I feel like I'm good.

Another student, Sonia, also indicated that she had found it beneficial to take the time to really think about her strengths and needs in writing:

> By thinking about these things that made a difference because we have to think about what we need or what we know how to do. I think if we didn't have time to think about that I think. . .I think it has made a difference. We have to put our minds to work to figure out what we really know how to do and what we need to do.

Awareness of Progress through Comparison of Work

Comparison of work from the beginning to the end of the semester could give students the opportunity to realistically assess their progress. This would benefit ESL students of all ability levels found in an ESL Writing Class. For example, Isabel acknowledged the positive difference reflecting had made for her when she compared her present work with her writing at the start of the semester:

> That's made a big difference, because when I have those question, I spend time thinking and I take a look back my work in my folder and I look at my back work and my present work and I know that I learned a lot. Those questions helped me to know

> my knowledge now in writing. I think that was very good. Because I can see the things that I learned I can know now that I learned so much this semester. I know now that I don't waste my time.

Another student response from Soku was representative of the potential for a change in attitude as well as skills:

> I think it makes a big difference. Because during when I make those papers, I compare myself with the beginning. Make my mind keep on working and I can see my fault or my mistake and my ideas on this paper, and it's very good way to learn. . .to develop my attitude or writing skills.

A third student, Roberto, who had planned to take ESL Writing Class the next semester in order to increase his writing ability before enrolling in Basic Writing, seemed comforted by the realization of progress that came from comparing his final work to his work at the beginning:

> Yes.. . .When I start [the beginning of the semester] I think a lot different [my] writing, 'cause [now] I can better write. . .I did a little progress. I think I should do better [though].

Comparing beginning work to final work allowed students to realistically assess their writing ability, and this knowledge gave them confidence in their continued progress. With humility characteristic of him in ESL Writing Class throughout the semester, Komi stated the benefits of reflection, "I learn[ed] more than before. I don't know enough, but I learn[ed] more." Stimulated by a review of her previous work and the subsequent realization of her dramatic progress, the following self-confident response by Elena stands as an exuberant recapitulation of the positive

difference the metacognitive process had made for most of the students in this study: "I will go over there. . .I will be excellent."

Thus, ESL students who reflect on their progress through comparison of their work from beginning to end might anticipate future progress as a result of confidence gained from acknowledgement of the progress already made throughout the semester.

Increased Awareness of Instructor

Besides the teacher-researcher's evaluation of students, reflections from the students themselves could be a valuable resource to the teacher-researcher. In this study, one student, Enid, acknowledged the potential benefit to an instructor. Her remarks in the following response indicated her opinion that an instructor (and by implication a teacher-researcher) could gain understanding of his/her students through these reflections:

> I think it was good for you to know the way we feel and what we have learn[ed] this semester.

Concluding Statements

In many respects the viewpoint of this teacher-researcher harmonized with the student-participants' viewpoints regarding the implications of the metacognitive approach reported above. Implications of the metacognitive

process for ESL writing students will be discussed in this section under the following subheadings:

Data for Curriculum Development and Research
"Encouraging" and "Enabling"
Self-Awareness and Autonomy in Learning

Data for Curriculum Development and Research

The metacognitive approach allowed gathering of research data useful for discovering what students had to report about attitude, writing identity, and self-direction as well as evaluating and planning a curriculum. The participatory process used in this metacognitive approach to ESL writing gave students ample opportunity to offer oral and written reflections. For an ESL instructor or researcher with a student-centered orientation, the students' perspective is crucial: students directly give added information useful for future curriculum development and learning theory through their oral and written reflections as well as through the usual written products of a writing course. In order to teach effectively in a student-centered classroom, educators need ways to find out more about individual students in their classrooms, which the metacognitive process can provide.

"Encouraging" and "Enabling"

In the beginning of the semester, students in this study had tended to focus on their needs without the ability

to acknowledge what they already knew--their strengths. Therefore, student-participants were given encouragement through interviewing language and acknowledgement of their strengths that "enabled" rather than "disabled" them (Rudman 1982). Encouragement and focus on strengths are suggested for ESL students who lack confidence and therefore possess negative feelings and self-evaluations that could inhibit their willingness to attempt writing and inhibit their progress. The findings of this study suggest that, when working with similar participants who lack self-confidence, a language of encouragement during research interviewing and/or instructional conferencing would be beneficial. Through the practice of reflection, student-participants learned how to acknowledge what they had learned while striving to work on what was still in need of improvement. By the final interview when reflecting on writing identity, students considered qualities that successful writers possessed and sought these qualities in themselves. An implication which logically follows from the above findings is that training for researchers and instructors in interviewing and/or instructional techniques that encourage would be beneficial.

Self-Awareness and Autonomy

Greater student self-awareness and autonomy in learning were encouraged through the metacognitive process that these

student-participants experienced. For example, in articulating feelings, attitudes had "surfaced for examination" (Wenden 1986), allowing the possibility for students to think more deeply about an attitude and change it to a more enabling emotion when appropriate. In this research study, during the process of "praxis," action and reflection, students then could re-act; that is, act again with greater knowledge and preparedness when they took steps to strengthen their skills in the necessary areas. Freire (1981) defined "praxis" as the process of reflection after action coupled with re-action and consequent reflection and action. In his work in the field of adult literacy in Third World countries, Freire considered "praxis" essential to expanding critical consciousness.

The practice of both oral and written communication which student-participants utilized in reflecting on all three metacognitive topics provided practice in expression of ideas and feelings in English. Writing practice and experience meant writing as behavior integrally connected to writers' actions, a relationship Alice Brand (1987b) indicated in "Writing as Counseling," which reported her work with middle school L1 students:

> Writing is a powerful way for children [and adults] to understand themselves as thinking, feeling, responsible individuals. Writing, like the oral mode of representing experience, has a psychological reality. Indeed, for some, the written word has more salience than the spoken word. Although writing has been known to serve as

> a stay against action, writing is not merely about behavior; it is behavior. Thinking about things and then committing them to paper can be an extraordinarily significant act in itself. The writing often starts therapeutic behavior, and the mere recording of an event can represent a breakthrough.
>
> . . .Although cause and effect has not been established, writing seems to proceed hand in hand with psychological growth, to reflect and enhance it, to deepen and extend it, and often to quicken the process. (p. 274)

Brand (1987a & b) suggested that writing served multiple functions (behavioral, cognitive, and psychological):

> Writing is as powerful tool for naming and understanding experience because in the process one can recruit far more than cognitive functions. Writing may be generated by a profound network of impulses, feelings, and images. Writing has its affective ramifications. In the sense that individuals learn to do certain things through language, they acquire certain emotional skills and sensitivities. For example, because writing refines cognition, students may become capable of enjoying more subtle experiences. Problem solving on paper becomes salutary if people learn methods that can be applied to the situations of daily living. Fluency in communication may facilitate equivalent gains in self-confidence. At a deeper level, writing enhances awareness by (a) helping individuals organize their inner selves, (b) contributing to personal integration and self-validation, and (c) providing a cathartic emotional release (Brand, in press). Through writing, students learn to think about themselves perceptively and precisely--who they are, how they feel, and what they do. Indeed, in a very real way, writing can create and sustain psychological existence. (1987b, p. 266)

Similarly, written reflections on metacognitive topics in this exploratory study may have had its affective and behavioral ramifications for adult L2 student-participants.

Perhaps, as Brand's statement above (1987b) suggests, increased "fluency in communication" through the practice of reflection may have facilitated "equivalent gains in self-confidence" for the participants of this dissertation study. Also, writing may have enhanced self-awareness, and students may have learned to think about themselves more "perceptively and precisely," which would be personally empowering.

Both the orientation of the classroom and the participatory nature of the research process encouraged autonomy in learning in the area of self-direction through the practice of self-evaluation and planning. Self-assessment of writing strengths and needs gave students practical experience in self-evaluation. Deciding upon steps to take regarding writing improvement gave students practical experience in academic self-direction and planning.

Engagement in "praxis" opened the way for personal "empowerment" for students. In this study, metacognitive topics provided opportunities for reflection that allowed student-participants to proceed toward directing their own learning. The students engaged in "praxis," increased their metacognitive awareness, began to direct their learning, and grew as writers through this process.

APPENDIX A

AUDIO-TAPED CONFERENCES AND WRITTEN RESPONSES (CONTENTS)

Summary of Conference 1
(Week 1)

The following questions summarize the first conference. Oral responses to these questions will be audio-taped with the students' permission. Questions enclosed in brackets indicate other wording used in written or oral form at other times throughout the semester.

1. Greetings.

2. Is it all right if I audio-tape this conference? I would like your permission, but if you don't want me to audio-tape, that's fine.

3. Before we begin, do you have any questions or anything else you would like to say?

4. Basic information (See "Basic Information Questionnaire" in this appendix)

5. What is your attitude toward writing? How do you feel about writing?

6. What are you able to do as a writer? What can you do? [What are your strengths?]

7. What do you need to work on in writing? [What are your needs?]

8. Describe yourself as a writer? What word do you think of when you think of yourself as a writer? If you were doing a mapping with "[Student Name] as a Writer" in its center, what would you write?

9. What can you do to make learning to write easier for you? [What steps can you take to capitalize on what you already know? What steps can you take to improve?]

10. Is there anything you want to say? Is there anything you would like to ask? Is there anything else?

11. Closure.

Summary of Conference 2
Mid-Term Conference
(Week 8)

At Conference 2, students will be discussing topics they have had time to reflect upon before coming to this mid-term conference. (See this appendix, "Mid-Term Self-Evaluations," for students' handout in preparation for Conference 2.) The following questions summarize the second conference. Oral responses to these questions will be audio-taped with the students' permission. Questions enclosed in brackets indicate other wording used in written or oral form at other times throughout the semester.

1. Greetings.

2. Any questions or anything else you would like to say before we begin?

    2a. Discussion generated by student's response.

3. Do you mind if I audio-tape this conference? Can I have your permission to tape this conference?

4. I'm going to ask you questions that you already answered on the mid-term handout, but I'd like to hear what you have to say.

5. First of all, I wanted to hear what you are able to do well in writing? What do you feel like you can do in writing? What are you able to do? What are your strengths?

    5a. Discussion generated by response. Questions to elicit elaboration of response. Questions relevant to the students' responses. For example, explanation of terms used by student in response to, or request for, enumeration of other writing strengths.

    5b. What are you going to do to work with this? How will you use this/these strength/s to continue to improve in writing?

    5c. Discussion generated by response. Questions to elicit elaboration of response.

6. What are your needs in writing? What do you need to work on?

6a. Discussion generated by response. Questions to elicit elaboration of response. For example, explanation of terms used by student in response to, or request for, other needs to be addressed besides the initial response.

6b. What are you going to do to work on these needs? What concrete steps can you take to improve in this/these area/s?

6c. Discussion generated by response. Questions to elicit elaboration of response. For example, explanation or clarification of actual steps student will take, explanation or clarification about each need student mentions, or request for enumeration of further writing needs.

7. How do you feel about writing? What is your attitude toward writing?

8. Closure.

Summary of Conference 3
Final Exam Week
(Week 16)

At Conference 3, each student will be discussing topics s/he has had time to reflect upon before coming to this final conference. (See this appendix, "Final Essays and Self-Evaluations," for students' handout in preparation for conference 3.) The following questions summarize the third conference. Oral responses to these questions will be audio-taped with each student's permission. Questions enclosed in brackets indicate other wording used in written or oral form at other times throughout the semester.

1. Greetings.

2. First of all, is there anything you want to say? Do you have any questions you would like to ask?

3. Do you have any qualities or characteristics of an excellent writer? Discuss one of them.

    3a. Discussion generated by response.

4. Describe yourself as a writer. Choose one quality or characteristic and support that with evidence and examples from your writing work this semester.

    4a. Discussion generated by response.

5. Student will read aloud essay written in preparation for the final conference. Student will choose from one of two topics: student's career goal or description of an imaginary future world.

6. What is your attitude toward writing?

7. This semester, has your attitude toward writing changed? If so, how?

8. Has your writing improved? If so, how?

9. What will you use to complete a writing task for college? Say only which steps you really think you will take?

    9a. Will you do anything differently now than you would have done before this semester?

10. Discuss at least one writing strength you have.

11. Discuss at least one writing need you have.

12. In the writing course, if there were one thing you could change, what would that be? Choose from all the things we did in ESL Writing Class.

13. In the writing course, if there were one thing you would keep, what would that be? For example, what actually helped you learn the most? Choose from all the things we did in ESL Writing Class.

14. Did you think or do you think that thinking about the writing and what you did made any difference? Or to ask you in another way, if I never asked you any of these questions during conferences or you never wrote reflections in class or for homework, would there be any difference? For you, is there any difference between thinking about writing and not thinking about writing?

    (This question was prefaced by examples of the written and oral questions students reflected upon throughout the semester such as these three conferences, "Reflections on Writing Class," or the automatic writing about "Uses for Writing in the Future.")

15. Anything else you want to say or ask?

16. Closure.

Basic Information Questionnaire
(Week 1)
(In-Class Assignment)

Name_____
Street_____
City or Town_____Phone_____

Career goal, wish, or dream_____
_____
_____

Where did you attend school? Town or country only.
Elementary School (grades 1-6) _____
Junior High (grades 7-8) _____
High School (grades 9-12) _____
Year of Graduate Equivalency Diploma (G.E.D.) _____
Or Year of high school diploma _____

Where are you from originally?
(Puerto Rico, Foreign Country, or mainland U.S.)
_____

What is your first language (L1)? _____

How long have you been in the U.S.? _____

How long have you studied English? _____

How long have you done the following:

Listened to English with Understanding?_____
Spoken in English? _____
Read in English? _____
Written in English? _____

Mid-Term Self-Evaluations
(Week 8)
(Page 1 of 7)

WORK DUE AT THE TIME OF THE MID-TERM CONFERENCE
BRING THIS PAPER WITH YOU AT YOUR SCHEDULED TIME

After you do all that these introductory pages request, answer the questions in list form on pages 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Consider the homework for the writing course: journal homework of automatic writings and freewritings.

Consider the three papers you worked on so far in writing workshop: self-introduction, instruction paper, and your description of a person.

Consider your writing experiences.

What process have you used to complete your papers in writing workshop? What steps have you used. (Look at the "Writing Process" handout: choose a topic, thinking with mapping, automatic writing and freewriting, outlining and organizing your ideas, planning an order for your draft, first draft, second draft, third draft, and other drafts perhaps.)

What else has enabled you to complete your papers? What qualities do you possess that enable you to write effectively?

Consider the "Checklist for Revising" which noted four levels to ask questions about when you begin to revise your paper (draft). These four levels were categorized as follows: content, organization, sentence-level, and word-level.

Consider (think about) everything you have written in a very specific way. After you have carefully looked at your homework and in-class writing work, fill out the next four pages. (When you are finished, sign the last page.) Remember, you do not need sentences; this assignment calls for you to list your answers.

Page 3 asks you to list your strengths in writing.
Page 4 asks you to list the steps you plan to take to continue to use these writing strengths, ways to improve upon them, and ways to make good use of these strengths that you do have.
Page 5 asks you to list your needs in writing.
Page 6 asks you to list the steps you will take to work on these needs.

This work is part of your work for the first half of the writing course. Please think about all on page 1 in order to complete pages 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Read over your work. Think about what you have accomplished. Think about what you have revised during writing workshop, what you can now revise on your own, and what you can revise after a brief conference with your instructor during writing workshop.

BE PREPARED FOR YOUR OFFICE CONFERENCE

Page 3 Name_____Date_____

List your strengths as a writer. What can you do well? What can you accomplish? What have you done effectively? Look back at the introductory page of this handout for all you need to consider in answering this question.

Page 4 Name _____Date_____

Look at the strengths you listed on page 3.

How can you capitalize upon these strengths as a writer? (How can you take advantage of these strengths? How can you profit from your strengths?) What will you do in order to make the best of your strengths in the last half of this writing course and in your writing in the future? How will you use these strengths in future writing that you may do?

Page 5 Name _____Date_____

What are your needs in writing?

This question is asking you what you need to work on to improve in writing. Look back at the introductory page of this handout for all that you need to think about when you answer this question.

List your needs in writing.

Page 6 Name _____Date_____

Look at the needs you listed on page 5.

What steps will you take in order to answer these needs? What will you do to improve your writing? What strategies will you use during your writing process? (Be specific. Be particular.) Say exactly what you will do to answer each need you listed on page 5.

This question is asking you for very concrete things you plan to do in order to work on your writing needs. List what you will do here.

Page 7 Name_____Date_____

Look over your work. Check each page. Think about what you have written. Think about what you plan to do for ESL Writing Class in order to continue to improve in writing.

After you have completed everything on this handout, sign the following statement:

> I have read everything over and have completed this assignment, which asks for my assessment of my writing strengths and needs and asks for my own educational plan that I intend to follow for the rest of the semester.

Name_____Date_____

Final Essays and Self-Evaluation
(Week 16)
Final Exam Week

ESL Writing Class
Final Take Home Exam
(Essay Questions)
Page 1 of 5

This work is due at the time of your final conference.
Attach all process work to the finished copy with a paper clip.
Write your final drafts on the paper provided (pages 2-5).

Part I:
Essay questions. Answer these in full sentences. These questions do not require paragraph form, but they do require sentences except for number 4, which requests a map or list.

Part II:
Answer numbers 8 and 9 in one paragraph each.

Part III:
Choose only one of the two topics described to write one strong paragraph.

As a guideline, spend about one hour on each part for a total of three hours, including copying your final writing on to the paper provided. Remember to narrow down your topic for each paragraph in Parts I and II so that you write a lot about a "little" rather than a little about a gigantic main idea. One fully developed main idea is better writing than a string of sentences that just make general statements about a lot of different ideas.

Use pen only, of course. If you want a copy of this final work, xerox it before you pass it in. These papers will not be returned.

Name_____Date_____

ESL Writing Class Take Home Essay Questions
Part I

1. What is your attitude toward writing?

2. This semester, has your attitude toward writing changed?_____If so, how has it changed?

3. Has your writing improved over this semester?_____ If it has, say how it has improved. (What areas? Use the vocabulary of the writing class. Be specific.)

4. In the space below, make a map or list of what you will use to complete a writing task for college in the future. (Say only what you really think you will do.)

Part I

5. When you have a writing project or task for college, will you do anything differently now than you would have done before September (before you entered this writing class)?
If so, what will you do differently now?

6. Name and discuss at least one writing strength you possess. (Think about how you you have used it and/or will use it to continue to improve your writing.)

7. Name and discuss at least one writing need you still have. (Think about how you can work to improve in that area. Think about concrete steps you can take to improve.)

Part II
Write short paragraphs for numbers 8 and 9.

8. Think back to your work describing an excellent writer this semester. Do you have any qualities or characteristics that you saw in an excellent writer? Name something or some things you possess or have the potential to possess. List them here:

Discuss at least one. Say how it works to help you write and/or how it will help you to write in the future.

9. Describe yourself as a writer. Pick at least one quality or characteristic and support your main idea with evidence from and examples about your own writing.

Part III
ESL Writing Class Take Home Final
Choose one topic about which to write one paragraph.

Topic 1. My Career Goal (Remember, choose only one topic.) Discuss your career goal or dream. First, state what it is. Then write a supporting paragraph. These are examples of what you can follow your main idea sentence with in order to expand or support your first statement: say why it's important to you. . . why it suits you. . .what difference it will make in your life.

Topic 2. The Future Describe some part of this future world. Pick one thing in the present world you know and imagine what it would be like.

> This future world fits these criteria. It is nonviolent; there are no weapons. Everyone has enough to eat, has a place to live, transportation, and all the other essentials in life. There are no diseases. People do get old and die, but they are very healthy until they do die.

Do not repeat the criteria that are stated here. Instead imagine one family, place, person, a party, or whatever, and describe it. Remember, write a main idea sentence, expand on that main idea in some way, and write a conclusion.

In-Class Automatic Writing or Freewriting
Student Questions about ESL Writing Class
(Week 1 & 8)

Name_____Date_____

Do you have any questions about Writing Class?

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRIES

WEEK 1

[Only Isabel and Elena asked questions. The rest of the students responded that they had no questions. Data from Isabel and Elena unavailable at this writing.]

WEEK 8

I love writing class. I keep wondering if I write clear. Do you understand what I write? Can any other person understand what I write? (Elena)

What should I do to improve the speed when I write? (Sonia)

I like to write, but sometime is hard to write some word. (Rosa)

I have a lot of problem do a 10 minute freewriting. I think I don't have question of this class, only sometime I have problem do automatic writing. (Juanita)

Which voice is used more frequently between passive voice and active if two ways are possible? In my country we usually use active voice. (Soku)

How can I improve in the writing class? I would like to know if I need a lot of grammar for the writing class? (Marisa)

I need help about writing ever to I can write. (Bae)

I don't have any question. (Francesca)

In-Class Automatic Writing or Freewriting
Attitude Toward Writing
(Week 3 & 8)

1. What is your attitude toward writing in English (ESL)? How do you feel about writing in English?
   Week 3: Write a 3-minute automatic writing on this topic.
   Week 8: Write either an automatic or freewriting for 3 minutes.

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRIES

When I write English I feel nervous because I don't no what are doing; but I try every day I try hard. Writing English is hard for me. I can't express my feeling exactly because I can't writing well. (Carita Week 3)

I feel good because now I'm writing more than before. In English I feel a little sad because I'm try hard but I can't understand everything. (Carita Week 8)

I feel writing comfortable but sometimes when I don't know spelling the letters I put mad because I didn't know write better. I like to learn more vocabulary for when I have to do something in English I feel comfortable. (Elba Week 3)

2. What is your attitude toward writing in your first language (L1)? How do you feel about writing in your first language (L1)?
   Week 3: Write a 3-minute automatic writing on this topic.
   Week 8: Optional freewriting on this topic.

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRIES

When I write Spanish I feel comfortable because is my first language. Sometimes I writing wrong in my language some word I writing wrong. When I write Spanish always I feel very happy. (Carita Week 3)

I don't feel my language is Spanish because I don't know how to write and read in Spanish. But speaking in Spanish is best that English for me. (Rosa Week 3)

In-Class Automatic Writing or Freewriting
Self-Evaluation
Reflections on Writing Class
(Week 6)

After the following questions were presented orally and students had an opportunity to ask questions to clarify the assignment, they were given about 30 minutes to write in-class on their reflections on Writing Class. The following is a summary which was written on the blackboard during the oral presentation of the assignment. Thus, it was available for each student's reference while s/he was reflecting.

Reflections on Writing Class

Think about your writing homework and in-class writing workshop. Here are some ideas for reflection:

*What have you accomplished?
*What have you learned that was new for you?
*What did you already know that you have practiced more?
*What did you know how to do that you have improved upon?
* What do you think you need to work on some more?
*What do you want to know more about?
*What questions do you have about writing class?
*Are you confused about something? If so, be as specific and clear as you can be, and say what is confusing you the most.

Summary of the work you have done so far:

Homework: observations, automatic writing, freewriting, some of the self-introduction work

Topics for in-class writing workshop: (3 papers) Self-Introduction, Instruction Paper, Description of a Person (At least one paragraph)

Other aspects of in-class writing workshop: this assignment, automatic writing in booklets, using a writing process for each topic with the following steps: choosing a topic, thinking with mapping, automatic writing and freewriting, outlining and organizing, revising drafts over and over, revising for content, organization, sentence-level, and word-level.

In-Class Automatic Writing or Freewriting
Booklets
Reflections About Learning
Relevant Booklet Entries
(Week 1-15)

Between 1 and 3 times a week, during class, each student was given a "Blue Book," commonly used for essay examinations, in which to date and time each entry of automatic writing. Usually no specific topic was assigned, so the students wrote about anything that came to mind in automatic writing or freewriting style for an assigned amount of time. Generally, these automatic writings were done within 3-5 minutes, depending on the time available during that class. The writing students did in these booklets was reviewed for its relevance to the research questions of this study, and relevant entries were included in the data.

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRY: Elena

. . .I wish to know more and more English and try, really, I'm try a lot to understand. Sometime I feel understand but when I began to do my homework I couldn't understand. I want to learn a lot. When I go to downtown and see and hear American people speak, I think I would like to speak like that. And I say to myself one day I will.

In-Class Automatic Writing or Freewriting
Booklets
Reflections About Learning:
Education
(Week 11)

First, the instructor discussed the word "education" emphasizing active participation of the student in his/her education and education that reaches beyond the classroom. Then each student wrote for five minutes about the meaning of "education" in his/her experience.

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRIES

Education is teaching or the training of mind and character. Education to me is very important. I wish I could learn all the thing that the teacher is explaining because I want to learn a lot because I want my children when they grow up to be proud of their mother. If I don't have any education, I never going to find a good job.
(Marisa)

The education is something you need for a lot of reasons. For example, for you to educate your kids you have to have some education yourself. Everytime you go to a different place that is new for you, people know how educated you are by how you act at the place. That's why you go to school for to get some education. You can do a lot of things with education like find a good job.
(Rita)

In-Class Automatic Writing or Freewriting
Booklets
Reflections About Learning
Uses of Writing for the Future
(Week 11)

First, the instructor presented the topic, "Uses of Writing for the Future," and students asked questions to clarify their understanding of the topic. Then students wrote for five minutes in class about their projected future uses for writing.

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRIES

I can use writing in the future to writing a resume for when I look for a job. I can use writing for a job application. I can use writing in the future if I have to write a letter at work. I think I can handle writing better now. I think that if I have to use in the future that I can use what I have learned here at this writing. I can use writing for my own personal use too. I can use it to write letters to my family. I have a cousin that is a English teacher in Puerto Rico. I can write him letters in English once in a while. I can use writing for lots of thing, but for me the most important reason to learn how to write is for when I start working in the future. I know I am going to need it. (Sonia)

I think I could give many uses to what I have learned. I might found in a situation where I have to describe a thing or a place, but at the moment I might find it difficult to start, so I just keep writing for a certain time, if possible time myself. I might use it for other purposes like letters, reports, homework, etc. If you're on a trip and you see some amazing things, you might want to share with friends and relatives. You just take a piece of paper and start writing, so you won't forget a thing.
(Elizabeth)

Journal Homework
Student-Chosen Topic
Week 1-15

Each week for homework, students wrote about a topic of their choice in freewriting or automatic writing style.

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRY: Carita (2 1/2 hours of freewriting)

When I came from Puerto Rico for the first time I thought the United States was something where I could live economically and personally. Everytime a person went to Puerto Rico, they said many wonderful things about the United States, but never said a bad things of the United States. I was started and wanted every minute to come here some day. For me, it was like a fantasy. Where the people who worked were not mistreated in the offices or places at which they worked in. I could never imagine the racism that there was here for Spanish and Black people. For me, everybody was treated like the same way. At first, I was sad because everything was different from the way I thought, but now I feel happy I can understand the form or culture of the United States. Now I like the hospitals and the education here. Every day I like it more and more because some offices have interpreters. I don't like some laws because they are not just. I like some American foods like pizza, taco, hamburgers, french fries and chicken. Sometimes, I like going to the lakes and parks. Also, I like visiting my family and friends when I have time for visit. Every two years I go to Puerto Rico with my children and husband. I like when my family comes to visit me here. Sometimes, I go to New York to visit my brothers and sister, but I don't like staying there for a long time.

Journal Homework
Reflections About Learning
Relevant Journal Entries
(Week 1-15)

Students in ESL Writing Class had free choice of topics for their assigned journal writing. This journal writing was homework due at the start of each writing workshop. As a rule, students were not assigned topics related to reflections about learning; however, when a student chose to write such reflections, these entries were included in the data for this study.

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRIES

I always get up early in the morning. Do my work in the apartment, take a shower, get my daughter up so she can get ready to go to school. After I get ready, we leave at the same time. My son leave before us. He leaves at 6:55 and we leave at 8:00. Then after I leave my daughter at her bus stop I get on the bus. . . When I get in college, I do some homework. Sometimes I have to see a tutor. I think I am doing better than before because I been writing more English, before I had problems pronouncing some trouble. I was afraid to write the English words, because I thought I was going to make a lot of mistakes and people were going to laugh at me. Now I know that you should try everything don't matter what. If you don't try you don't know how much you know. (Rita Week 4)

I'm writing about my conversation with [my writing instructor]. When she asks me a lot of question my mind is blank. I forget all the words in English I am very nervous. I want to talk to her but I can't do it. All the time when I try to answer her question I can't move my tongue. I feel terrible and I promise myself to try very hard to learn English and I hope someday I can speak English the same way I speak Spanish. (Carita Week 2)

Journal Homework
Writing Identity
Student Ideas Questionnaire
(Week 1)

Name_____Date_____

Do you have any ideas for Writing Class? What can we do in class that you think will help you learn writing best? What ideas do you have for activities or exercises in class?

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRIES

I really don't have no ideas on writing. I don't good in writing so I don't really know what to write.
(Sonia)

I can't express my ideas in this language because I'm use to expressing my ideas in Spanish. I have terrible feeling in English. I hope someday I can express my feeling in English like I do in Spanish. I'll try hard to learn English. (Carita)

Send more writing for homework to do at home.
(Rita)

I think I would like you to help me in writing better. I know how to write English but not so well. So I think I would need more help. (Luz)

The ideas I have for this class are write but well. We can do are, everytime I write please correct me and tell me why is error. Activities, like write. (Elena)

Practicing writing paragraph. Extract of a book, magazine or newspaper. Write something about nature. About [this city] or other town. Lot of writing practice. (Roberto)

Journal Homework
Writing Identity
Writing Experience: ESL & L1
(Week 3)

Name_____Date_____

List anything you have written in English or ESL (notes, letters, book reports, compositions, sentences for homework, songs, poems, applications, etc.):

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRIES

A letter to a university for transfer
I've filled out application to attend this school
I make reports everyday for math and English class
I wrote a Byron's poem at the English literature class in my country
Study plan to take a visa (Soku)

Letters to my friend
Notes to my mother
Applications for work
Homework
Notes to the teacher (Marisa)

List anything you have written in your first language (L1):

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRIES

All kinds of letter
for example letter to parents, love letter. . ., etc.
A graduation thesis
kept diary of reports
After reading a book I sometimes wrote my feeling or
perception about that
Made a application to take a job
Made exam paper to enter university
Noted the meaning of English word in my first language
Filled out all kinds of document that probably was needed
for me to make a living in my country
(Soku)

I write letters to my father.
I write story's to my son.
I write word's
Notes to my mother (Marisa)

Journal Homework
Writing Identity
Excellent Writer
(Week 7)

For Journal Homework, think about this topic and then write at least one full page on it. Describe a person who is an excellent writer in ESL 3 Writing Class. What do they do? What are they like?

Remember, to only discuss that person as a writer.*

* This person is getting an A+ in the ESL 3 Writing Class. Look at the steps of the writing process. What does the student do well? What does the student do during writing workshop? What does the student do when they have an assigned automatic writing or freewriting? What qualities does he or she possess that contribute to being an excellent writer? What steps of a writing process does he or she know how to do? What are her or his strengths?

Describe this excellent writer.

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRY: Roberto

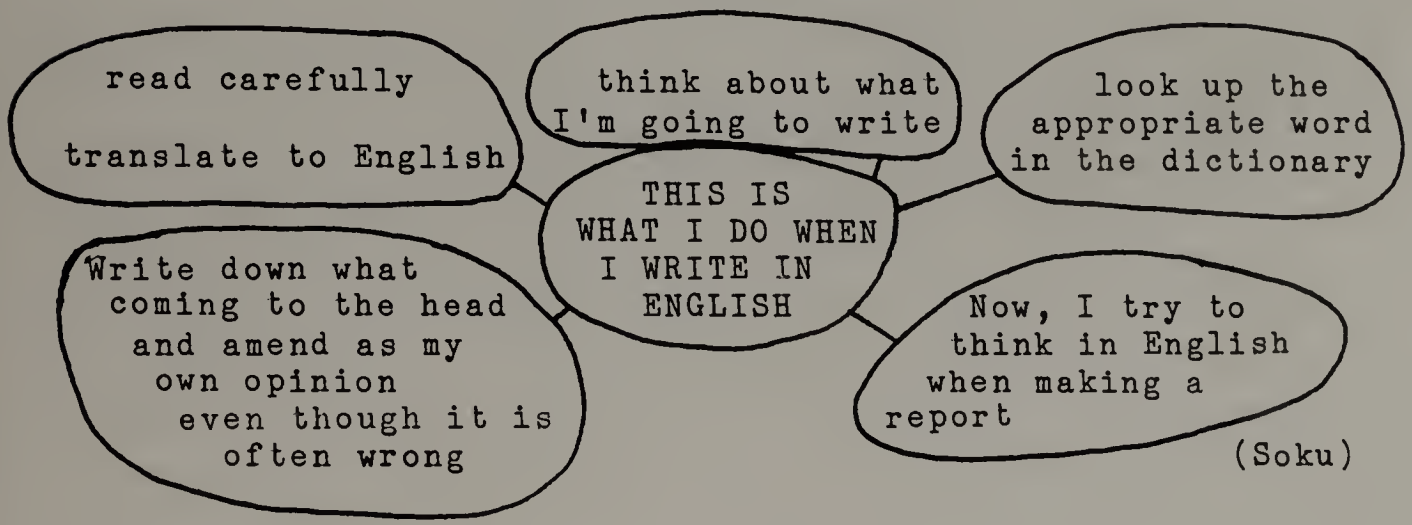
A person who is an excellent writer in E.S.L. 3 class should be a writer who follows all the writing process very careful. A writer whose main idea is clear for the reader to understand. A writer who chose an interesting topic and explain very good about what he is writing. Make the reader understand his thoughts. He has to organized his ideas in an excellent order. To get A+ in writing class the writer can't commit a single mistake in his writings. He has to write instruction step by step. All paragraph in order. Put the sentences in order. Don't write run on sentence. Put good punctuation. Check the spelling and use good word choice. Write sentences putting together what goes together. Write the compound and complex sentences the right way. The writer has to used example, evidence, expansion and close the writing the proper way. To be graded as an A+ the writer has to remember every rule of the writing process and don't make a single mistake. May be he had to write the mapping few times, or a freewriting first.

Journal Homework
Awareness of Own Process
Steps You Take When Writing
(Week 3)

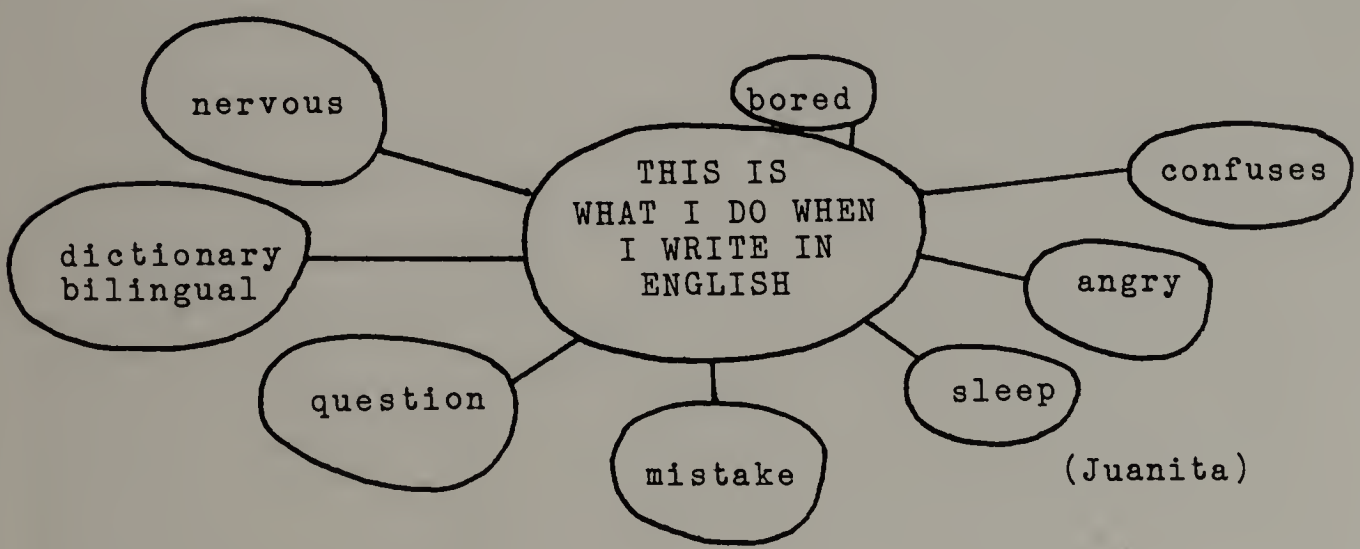
Name_____Date_____

Tell me what you do when you begin to write in English--especially a letter or paper that you think is somewhat formal (For example, for work or for school, or for public assistance). Just do a brainstorming. Do the mapping here.

SAMPLE STUDENT ENTRIES



(Soku)



(Juanita)

APPENDIX B

SYLLABUS (CONTENTS)

ESL Writing Class
ESL Writing Class Writing Workshop Portfolio
Discussion of the Writing "Process"
Checklist for Revising
Criteria for Grading

ESL Writing Class

You will have the opportunity to get a lot of writing practice in this course: You will be writing daily in class and for homework.

Goals of this course:

1. To improve writing skills so the student can progress to college-level courses.
2. To be able to write a paragraph that has a main idea (a general statement of the topic), expansion of that idea (details, explanation, etc.), and a closing (conclusion or resolution for the reader).
3. To be able to write an essay of at least 3-5 paragraphs.

Texts required for this course:

1. Huizenga, J., C. Snellings, and G. Francis. Basic Composition for ESL: An Expository Workbook. Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1986.
2. The American Heritage Dictionary
3. Longman Dictionary for Learners of English

Materials needed for this course:

1. Lots of paper. 8 1/2" by 11" only (no small paper accepted)
2. Pens to write with. No pencils allowed.
3. At least 3 folders (manila folders). One is for your homework assignments, other handouts, and notes. The second folder is for your journal homework portfolio. The third folder is for your portfolio for Writing Workshop. This will include final drafts and all the process work.

FORMS OF DISCOURSE COVERED: You will be writing the following types of paragraphs or papers: explanation, narration, description, and definition.

1. Explanation (See text "Unit 1 Giving Instructions")
2. Description
3. Narration (See text "Unit 2 Objective Reporting")
4. Definition (Interviews with a native and nonnative speaker of English--Research)

ESL Writing Class Writing Workshop Portfolio

I. Order of Assigned Papers

This semester you did your work on the following papers in this order:

1. Self-Introduction
2. Instruction
3. Description
4. Narration
5. Definition Test (From homework assignment)
6. Definition
7. Miscellaneous (Done throughout the semester)

II. Order to Put Papers in Your Portfolio

Please put your papers in your portfolio in reverse order so that your final work will be first in the folder. Remember to attach to each final draft all the steps you used in writing workshop for that paper.

Your work belongs in the folder in the following order:

1. Abstract term: Definition Paper (Research Paper)
2. Test on definition paper: a type of person
3. Custom, Holiday, or Special Event Paper: Narration
4. Description of a Person (one paragraph): Description
5. How to Do Something: Instruction Paper
6. Self-Introduction: Description Paper
7. Miscellaneous Papers

Discussion of the Writing "Process"

STEPS YOU MIGHT USE IN ESL WRITING CLASS

1. Thinking: Thinking with writing and with invention strategies (brainstorming)

   Invention strategies
   Automatic writing
   Mapping or clustered list
   Other techniques
   Freewriting

2. Choose a topic.

3. Use your thinking with writing to list your ideas.

4. Write down an order for these ideas.

5. Write your first draft.

6. Find out what needs to be worked in content and write a second draft.

7. Notice the order (organization). See if it is the best order to present your ideas. If you need to work on this, then do this in the third draft.

8. Look at the third draft. Then see if you need to work on your sentence-level needs. Write a fourth draft.

9. Look at the fourth draft. Then see if you need to work on word-level needs. Write a fifth draft.

10. Look at the fifth draft. Check everything again. Now, write your paper very neatly and submit for a grade. This is the final draft.

Checklist for Revising

WHEN REVISING, LOOK AT FOUR DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF YOUR WRITING--ONE AT A TIME. For example, work on one area at a time; that is, work on one large need in one draft. Wait for the next draft to work on the next writing need you have.

CONTENT: This is the foundation.

Substance. Topic choice. (The writer has something to say that is of importance to him or her. The writer is interested in the topic he or she chose.)

Contains a main idea or topic narrow enough for the paragraph or paragraphs. States the main idea in a general way. Contains supporting details, evidence, examples, or some expansion of the general topic or main idea. Contains some conclusion or resolution of thought for the reader.

Evidence and examples or generalizations and details? Aware of reader or audience? Creates a context for the reader or assumes the reader can follow his/her written verbalizations of his/her thoughts?

STRUCTURE: The organization of ideas helps the reader follow the writer's thoughts.

Coherent to the reader (holds together)? Transitions between ideas that help the reader to follow the thought of the writer? Unified piece of writing, as seen as a whole? If there is more than one paragraph, are the sentences in each paragraph grouped according to a cluster of ideas that go together?

SENTENCE LEVEL:

No run-on sentences. No sentence fragments (like this). Variety or repetitive sentence structure? Punctuation of sentences and clauses when necessary. Appropriate diction, mood, or level of formality for topic and audience.

WORD LEVEL:

Spelling. Appropriate word (Words used appropriate for topic and readers).

Agreement of pronoun and antecedent. Subject and verb agreement. Appropriate tone or voice. Tense agreement of verbs within a sentence or in the paper as a whole. Punctuation (examples: possessives and contractions). All other grammar considerations.

Criteria for Grading

Grading or evaluation based on the following:

1. Paragraph or Essay Portfolio of your work on different types of discourse. All revisions and drafts--everything. Save everything you write!

2. Journal and other Homework Portfolio of all your daily homework and journal assignments. Save everything.

3. Mid-Term Self-Evaluations (Due at mid-term conference)

4. Final Essays and Self-Evaluation (Due at final conference)

5. Work done punctually (on time). Late work will lower your grade.

6. Your good attendance record. This is very important. If you are not here, you are not writing during Writing Workshop. (More than 3 absences is not "good.")

Criteria Used in Evaluation of Writing Work

Only the last draft of each assignment will be graded and evaluated in terms of all criteria: content, organization, sentence-level and word-level.

One grade will be given to the final drafts of your paragraphs and essays. Content and organization count 60% and Sentence-Level and Word-Level count 40% in figuring your grade for each finished paper.

Remember, in your first writing, get your thoughts down on the page. Concentrate on content in your first writing. Don't let any other concerns block your creative writing process at this stage. In the early drafts, the focus will be on the content and structure. In later drafts, the focus will be on sentence- and word-levels, if content and structure are effective. On the other hand, if sentence- and word-level needs are numerous, they act as a barrier to clear reading of the paper. Should this be the case, sentence- and word-level needs will be addressed early in the writing process.

APPENDIX C

STUDENT-PARTICIPANTS' CONSENT FORM

December 1, 1986

TO: [Name of Individual Student], ESL III Writing Student,

FROM: Pauline Mountainbird, Doctoral Student,
University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003

REGARDING: Participation in Research Study

You know me as your ESL instructor at [City] Community College. This letter is most concerned with our work together in relation to Writing Class even though most of you also study Grammar and [Reading and Conversation] with me. For Writing Class, you have been using a process approach to writing which calls for a step-by-step approach to your writing. You have been reading your work at each step of the process, and independently and with guidance from me have been deciding on further development and/or revisions for your next draft on a topic. You also have been doing automatic writing and freewriting in class and at home. Sometimes, you have been responding in writing to something you have read for homework. As part of the Writing Class, you have come to my office for two individual conferences about writing and yourself as a writer. These conferences have been tape-recorded with your permission so that I could listen to you at a later date and not have to take lengthy notes or attempt to try to recall all you said at our conferences. Throughout the rest of the semester, the writing work will continue as it has in the past, except that you will work on new topics in class. In addition, we will have a final writing conference at my office at the end of the semester. All of this has been part of this Writing Class.

For my dissertation work, however, I am asking your permission to review and analyze what you have said orally in conferences or what you have written about learning English as a Second Language: especially learning to write, about your own writing process, and about yourself as a writer. I am also asking your permission to quote you (either a direct quotation or a paraphrasing) within my dissertation, which will be a very long research paper about ESL learners and writing.

The purpose of my study is to learn more about how ESL learners learn to write. Just by being my students you, of course, have taught me a lot about how ESL learners learn to write. I want to thank you for this. However, for my dissertation I need to carefully review all that has been said about learning English as a Second Language--especially about writing and yourself as a writer. For my dissertation, it is necessary to report on what I have reviewed and analyzed. In order to do this, it is necessary for me to have research participants; that is, students who are willing to have their ideas paraphrased and sometimes directly quoted.

I want to let you know that you do not have to participate in my research study at all. You have had to participate in the Writing Class since you elected to take ESL Writing Class, but you do not have to give your permission for me to use your ideas or exact words in my dissertation work. You are under no obligation to participate in my research study in this way.

If you do give your permission for me to either paraphrase or quote you, your privacy will be protected. I will not use your real name, nor will I name the college you attend in my research paper. A made-up name, or pseudonym, will be used and the college will be be called "City Community College."

As I mentioned previously, my purpose is to analyze (examine in detail) the material that I gather about your awareness of learning to write and your awareness of yourself as a writer. I plan to use the analyzed material in my doctoral dissertation. I may also use the material in other educational writing or speaking; for example, in journal articles and workshops for ESL teachers.

I certainly want to encourage you to participate in the study (my doctoral research). On the other hand, I want to you know that you do not have to participate unless you want to. Also, you may withdraw your permission at a later date, if you later decide you do not want your ideas quoted or paraphrased.

In signing the form below, you are agreeing to take part in the study under the conditions set forth above in this letter. You are also assuring me that you will make no financial claim on me now or in the future for your participation.

Thank you for thinking about whether or not you will be part of my study. I look forward to the possibility of you being part of my research project on ESL learners and writing by giving permission to be paraphrased or quoted.

Signature_____
(Pauline Mountainbird)

DO NOT DETACH. PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN ONE COPY OF THIS FORM. KEEP THE OTHER COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS.

Participant's Consent (Permission):

I,_____, have read the statement above and agree to participate in the study under the conditions stated therein (in the letter above).

_____
Signature of Participant Date

APPENDIX D

TABLES OF BASIC INFORMATION (CONTENTS)

Table 1
Comparison of General ESL Population and ESL Writing Class: Age, Sex, and Origin

ESL Students	Age	Sex	Puerto Rico	Foreign
General	27 Median	90% F.	90%	10%
Research	25 Av.	82% F.	80%	20%

Table 2
Comparison of General ESL and Research Population: Test Scores

Entrance Tests	CCC Test	Mich. Test
Total Number of Items on Test	80	100
Approximate Gen. Pop. Av. Score	30	60
Research Pop. Average Score	38	73.5
Research Pop. Range of Scores	26-49	50-87

Table 3
ESL Writing Class: Age, Sex, L1, and Native Land

Students	Age	Sex	L1	Native Land
1.	--	female	Korean	Korea
2.	37	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
3.	33	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
4.	25	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
5.	28	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
6.	24	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
7.	18	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
8.	18	male	Korean	Korea
9.	25	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
10.	18	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
11.	30	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
12.	39	female	Spanish	Peru
13.	35	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
14.	47	male	Spanish	Puerto Rico
15.	32	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico
16.	21	male	Korean	Korea
17.	32	female	Spanish	Puerto Rico

Table 4
ESL Writing Class: Amount of Schooling Completed before Entrance to ESL Program

Completed Grade	College	12	10	9	8	5
Number of Students	1	6	3	1	5	1

Table 5
ESL Writing Class Students: Status in ESL Program

Status	Number of Students
Entering Students	9
Previously in Level 2	5
Repeating Level 3	3

Table 6
ESL Writing Class: Time in Mainland U.S. and Test Scores

Students	Time in Mainland U.S. (Years)	CCC Test (Week 2)	Mich. Test (New Students)
a.	6	29	--
b.	8	29	--
c.	11	38	--
d.	5	32	50
e.	12	42	82
f.	5	34	65
g.	4	29	--
h.	1 1/4	48	--
i.	13	38	85
j.	18 ?	26	--*
k.	12	30	--
l.	3	37	--
m.	20	36	72
n.	12-26**	40	73
o.	26	26	--
p.	1/12	49	84
q.	9-19**	42	87

* This entering-student was not officially enrolled in the ESL Program, so did not take the Michigan Test.

** This student returned to his/her native land after living in the U.S. for a number of years. The student later moved back to the U.S.. Thus, the first number indicates the number of years prior to enrollment in the ESL Program and the second number indicates the total number of years.

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